SEE 14 October 1756

SAFETY AND SVVEETS IN AFFLICTIONS AND SUFFERINGS;

Manifested in some Meditations on 1 Pet. 4. 12, 13.

LONDON,
Printed by *S. Dover*, for *G. Calvert*, at the *Black-spread-Eagle*, at the West-end of *Pauls*, 1660.

John THE Blackall's

PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

Christian Reader,

I *Having desired a Minister, a Friend of mine, to send me some brief Notes on the* twelfth Verse *of the* fourth Chapter *of the* first Epistle *of* Peter; *he was pleased (some Months since) to send me what thou hast here presented to thee on the* twelfth Verse, *with an Addition of some of his* Meditations *on part of the* thirteenth Verse; *in*

the perusal whereof, I found much refreshings in my own spirit; I thereupon Communicated them to several others, whom I judged sober and judicious Christians; who also found much refreshings by that comfortable savour which they tasted in them, and with much earnestness pressed me to make them publick, conceiving that those things might not be unuseful to others, which had been so refreshing to themselves. I hereupon commend them to thee, and thy self (in the reading of them) to the blessing and enlightning of the Lord;

Farewell.

SAFETY and SWEETS IN *Afflictions* and *Sufferings*.

1 Peter, 4. 12, 13.

Verſ. 12. *Beloved, think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery Tryal which is to try you, as though ſome ſtrange thing happened to you.*

WE intend not to inſiſt upon any curious diviſion of the words, but ſhall take up the conſideration of the words in that order wherein they lye in the Text, and exerciſe our ſelves in ſome uſefull Meditations upon them. Ver. 12.

Ver. 12

Beloved.

The Apoſtle writ this Epiſtle in a *ſeaſon* of *ſuffering*, (ver. 17. *For the time is come, that Judgment muſt begin at the Houſe of God*) and to a *ſuffering people*, *ſtrangers ſcattered, and in heavineſs through manifold temptations and tryals* (Chap. 1. 1, 6.) which came upon them both from ſuch as were really profane (*viz.* the *Gentiles*) and ſuch as were falſly Profeſſors (*viz.* the Unbelieving *Jews*, and falſe Teachers amongſt themſelves, as appears by his *ſecond Epiſtle*) And therfore you may obſerve, that there is not one Chapter in this his Epiſtle, wherein there is not ſome hint of their *Sufferings*, and ſome Conſolation or Exhortation concerning them. In this Chapter, from this 12 verſ. to the end of the Chapter, he carries on a continued diſcourſe concerning this Subject, which he begins with this Compellation, *Beloved.* It is a *Compellation* that ſpeaks endea-

endeared affection. They were never the leſſe lovely, or beloved, becauſe they were afflicted. He doth (in the Miniſtry of the Spirit) over-ſpread them, and all their Sufferings, with a banner, or canopy of Love. This was their Portion and Priviledge in, and under all, to be baptized into this name, *Beloved.* Ver. 12.

Whence obſerve, *That Sufferings do not at all render us leſs lovely, or leſs beloved.*

1. Firſt, *Not to God.* For it is himſelf that by the mouth of his Apoſtle here ſpeaks to them in this endeared *Compellation.* As *all Scripture,* ſo this was *given by Inſpiration of God.* And, *as Holy men of old,* ſo the Apoſtle alſo here *ſpake as he was moved by the holy Ghoſt.* In writing this very Compellation [*Beloved*] he was moved by the holy Ghoſt. And the holy Ghoſt doth not here (by the Miniſtry of his Apoſtle) baptize his ſuffering Servants into a Name, to which he would not have

Ver. 12 them anſwer. He calls them not by this name, as one that is unwilling to be over-heard. He is not aſhamed to call them, and own them as his *Beloved*, even under the greateſt hatred of the world. He ſpake not this in ſecret, in a dark place of the Earth, but hath herein *declared the thing that is right*, Iſa. 45. 19. His Word and Voice in this Compellation, is not (*as the voice of one that hath a Familiar ſpirit*) *out of the ground, neither doth it whiſper out of the duſt*, (Iſa. 29. 4.) as unwilling to be over-heard or underſtood by his ſuffering Servants; but in the *evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit*, and in openneſs and uprightneſs, he here ſpeaks of, and to, his ſuffering Servants, as his *Beloved*. And hath alſo cauſed it to be written as a Record, to abide throughout all Generations. We have here his Word and his Hand for it, which he will never diſown. And therefore *let us come near, and hear this*, (Iſa. 48. 16.) Let every

every ſuffering ſoul bring his ear and heart near to the Lord in this Word: and the ſame Spirit that moved in the inditing this Word, ſhall alſo move in him (in his upright attendance unto this Word of Divine Witneſs) and he ſhall through this very Word hear the Lord ſpeaking of him, and to him (notwithſtanding all his ſorrows and ſufferings) as a *Beloved One*. And in the ſence and hearing hereof, he ſhall be able to give forth that publick challenge of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8. 35, *&c. Who ſhall ſeparate us from the love of Chriſt? ſhall tribulation, or diſtreſs, or perſecution, or famine, or nakedneſs, or peril, or ſword*; though *for his ſake we ſhould (as ſheep appointed for the ſlaughter) be ſlain all the day long?* Shall any, or all theſe things ſeparate us from his love? ſhall they? can they? Cannot the everlaſting Arms reach through all theſe things, and comprehend us in an everlaſting imbrace, notwithſtanding all theſe? Nay, *in* Ver. 12

all

Ver. 12. *all theſe things, we are more than Conquerors, through him that hath loved us,* in and under all theſe things, and as it were in deſpight of all theſe things: Theſe things do neither obſtruct his love, nor render us the leſs lovely to him. For,

Firſt, The ſufferings of Chriſt are the channel of conveyance through which his love is derived and communicated to us. In the Death of Chriſt his love ſtands commended to us, *Rom.* 5. 8. And if his love run forth upon us through death, wounds, ſhame, ſpitting, buffeting, bonds, reproach, ſcorn and ſcourges (all which Chriſt ſuffered) I ſay, if it run forth toward us, through theſe things, then certainly it will not refuſe to pour out it ſelf upon us notwithſtanding theſe things. Nay, it the more readily flows forth upon us here, becauſe in theſe conditions it meets with, and finds in us ſomewhat wherein we ſymbolize, and carry ſome conformity to that

ſtate

ſtate through which this love becomes ſhed abroad upon us. And therefore (*Pſal.*22. 24.) having given account of the ſufferings of Chriſt, he comes to enlarge all the ſeed of *Iſrael* into the praiſing of him, as one that doth not *deſpiſe nor abhor the affliction of the afflicted, neither hideth his face from him.* He neither abhors the perſon [him] nor the condition [affliction.] Ver. 12.

2ly, The ſufferings of the Chriſtian, are the higheſt Teſtimony of the Chriſtians love to him. It ſpeaks our love to him, that we will do for him, that we will ſubmit to and obey him in what he appoints us to do. But it ſpeaks a higher Teſtimony of love to him, that we will not only do, but alſo endure for him: that was the obedience of the Son, that he *humbled himſelf, and became obedient even unto Death.* Now a ſuffering condition being one of the higheſt Teſtimonies of our love to him; (and the greater the

Ver. 12. the ſuffering is, the greater is the Teſtimony of our love to him) hence it evidently follows, that the greateſt and foreſt ſuffering for him, cannot render us leſs lovely to him, or leſs beloved by him: but rather more abundantly both lovely, and beloved.

2. Secondly, *They do not render us leſs lovely, or leſs beloved of good men.* Suffering Saints are ſtill *good-mens beloved*, as well as *Gods beloved*. There is ſomething in Affliction, that doth as it were naturally beget and awaken the affections of others into an activity of compaſſion: ſo that they become the more endeared to us in the Lord, by how much the more they are diſtreſſed for the Lord. And there is great reaſon that a ſuffering member ſhould be very dear to the whole body: becauſe thoſe ſufferings that are undergone for Chriſt, are alſo for the advantage of all his fellow-members. For while he is filling up

that

that which is behind of the ſufferings of Chriſt in his fleſh, it is for *his bodies ſake, which is the Church*, Col. 1. 24. Full deliverance and ſalvation makes a nearer advance towards the comprehending and overſpreading the whole Body, by the ſuffering of each member; becauſe every ſuch ſuffering contributes to the filling up that which is yet behind of the ſufferings of Chriſt: and when once that meaſure is filled, then will full and everlaſting Salvation bring in the glorious liberty of the Children of God. Ver. 12.

Think it not ſtrange.

1. Note. *The Spirit and Word of God, gives Law to our very thoughts.* As we are not left at liberty to ſpeak or do what we our ſelf liſt; ſo, not ſo much as to think what we pleaſe; for our hearts are no more our own, than our tongues are. And the Word of God is a *diſcerner of the thoughts and*

Ver. 12. *and intents of the heart*, Heb. 4. 12.

2. Note. *As we are not left to the liberty of our own thoughts in other things; ſo (in particular) not of our Sufferings.* Fleſh and blood is very prone to think amiſs of Sufferings, to repreſent them to our thoughts as things that have in them more dread and danger than indeed they have. And therefore the Spirit of Truth comes forth in this and other Scriptures to give Law to our very hearts, that he may thereby rectifie even our very thoughts concerning a ſuffering condition, and purifie our very minds from thoſe miſtakes, and falſe imaginations, that fleſh and blood are continually ſuggeſting to us, to make us ſtumble and take offence at the Croſs, *Hebr.* 12. 5. *Deſpiſe not the chaſtning of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* Deſpiſe not, undervalue it not, think not meanly of it, as a thing that hath no worth or good in it; for thereby thou maiſt

be

be brought to faint under it. Miſ- Ver. 12.
takes about the Croſs, will occaſion miſcarriages in our bearing it. They will be ready to bear their ſufferings otherwiſe than they ought, that think of them otherwiſe than indeed they are; whereas a right underſtanding and judgement of them, doth much help to ſweeten and make them eaſie. *Moſes* was hereby made able to refuſe the title of the ſon of *Pharaohs* daughter, and to forſake the pleaſures of ſin, and chuſe affliction with the People of God, becauſe he had the right ſenſe of ſufferings. *For he eſteemed the reproach of Chriſt, greater treaſures than the pleaſures of Egypt*, Heb. 11. 24,25,26. He had a right eſtimate of them; and therefore could forſake all for them.

3. Note, *As in other things, ſo in this, we think amiſs of ſufferings, when we think ſtrange at them, and look upon them as ſtrange things;* [Think not ſtrange.] The word intimates, that wonder

Ver. 12. wonder and aſtoniſhment wherewith we behold and look upon ſome uncouth Perſon, Beaſt, or thing that is brought out of ſome far ſtrange Countrey. *Peter* uſeth the ſame word before, Chap. 4. 4. where he tells us, that when any of the *Gentiles* were converted from their Laſciviouſneſs, Luſts, exceſs of Wine, Revellings, Banketings, and abominable Idolatries; they that continued ſtill in thoſe courſes, thought it *ſtrange*, that the other ſhould *not run with them to the ſame exceſs of Riot*, and ſpake evil of them. They then lookt upon, and ſpake of them, as a ſtrange people, as men of ſome other ſtrange Countrey, as ſome ſtrange monſtruous Beaſt, brought out of ſome ſtrange Countrey, as ſuch as were unuſually known among them, which they never had ſeen, nor never expected to ſee, as thoſe with whom they knew no more how to converſe, than we do with ſtrangers,

gers, whoſe Language we under- Ver. 12.
ſtand not. And now he uſeth the ſame word here, implying, that he would not have them think as *ſtrangly of ſufferings*, as they did of their *becoming new men*. Let not ſufferings from them, be as *ſtrange* to you, as your Holineſs and Exactneſs is to them. I would have you better acquainted with, and more reconciled to the Croſs, than they are with and to your exact walking and holineſs. So that, not to *think ſtrange* concerning the *fiery Tryal*, implyes theſe five things.

1. *Think not of ſuffering and affliction, as an unexpected thing, as a thing you never looked for.* We are apt to ſtrange at thoſe things that we never dreamed or thought of: when ſuch things happen, they do by their ſuddenneſs and unexpectedneſs, ſurprize us with wonder & amazement. But let not the Croſs be to you as a thing you never expected, as a ſtate

Ver. 12. you never thought to have met with. Let it not in this reſpect be as a ſtranger, or as a *ſtrange thing* to you. When we look for a man beforehand, we do not (when he is come) entertain him as a ſtranger, we do not wonder that he comes; for he is one that we had before expected, for we had before been told of his coming. So, if a Chriſtian ſits down and counts his coſt, he cannot but count upon the Croſs; He cannot but look for its coming; for he hath before been told of it. So Chriſt is beforehand telling his Diſciples of the entertainment they were to meet with in the World, John 15. 17, 18, 19. That *the World would hate them, as it had hated him before them; and that becauſe they were not of the World, but he had choſen them out of the World.* And then he adds, Chap. 16. 1. *Theſe things have I ſpoken to you, that you ſhould not be offended*; that they might not come upon you as things you never looked

looked for, and ſo you ſhould ſtrange and ſtumble at them. Know, *They ſhall put you out of the Synagogues, and think they do God ſervice in killing you. But theſe things have I told you before, that when the time ſhall come, ye may remember that I told you of them.* (verſ. 2,4.) That ſo when the ſtrong Bulls of *Baſhan* ſhall beſet you, and even gape upon you with their mouths, as a ravening and roaring Lyon: when Dogs ſhall encompaſs you, barking & biting at you; when the Aſſembly of the Wicked ſhall encloſe you, and part your Garments and Goods among them, &c. (as they did to me) that you may then remember that I told you of them, and that therefore you ſhould not *think ſtrange* that ſuch *Beaſts* of *Epheſus* are brought in upon you: that you ſhould not be ſurprized with amazement, as at things that you never heard of, nor never looked to have to do with. Ver. 12.

2. *Think not of ſuffering and affli-*

Ver. 12. *ction, as an unuſual and unaccuſtomed thing.* We do not ſtrange and wonder at things that are common, obvious, ordinary, and uſual. But if any thing happen that very rarely or ſeldom falls out; or if we ſee any thing that is unuſual, that is ſcarce ſeen, or appears in an age, we wonder and think ſtrange at ſuch a thing. Now the Apoſtle would not have us think of Sufferings and Afflictions, as of things that ſo rarely & ſeldom happen to, and befal the People of God. But to think of the *Croſs*, as ſo ordinary, uſual, and accuſtomed thing, as that the like hath been, and befallen to the People of God in all times, and to all their Perſons. Oppoſition from the World, and ſufferings in the Saints, is no new thing in the earth, that we ſhould at all ſtrange at it. All ages are filled with memorials of ſuch things, written in the Tears and Blood of God's ſuffering-ſervants, from *Abel*, and all along downward, *Hebr.* 11.

11. And therefore we might rather wonder and think it ſtrange, if our times, and our perſons, ſhould not afford exemplifications of that which hath been ſo common and cuſtomary in all times: eſpecially ſince the Apoſtle poſitively tells us, *That if any man will live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus, he ſhall ſuffer perſecution*, 2 Tim. 3. 12. Ver. 12.

3. *Think not of ſuffering and affliction, as a thing ſtrange to the Countrey and Condition in which you are now.* You are here *Strangers and Pilgrims* (1 Pet. 2. 11.) And it is ſo uſual and ordinary for Strangers and Pilgrims to meet with hard things, hard uſage, hard words, that it ſhould not ſeem ſtrange to you to meet with ſuch things. You are *in the world* (*though not of the world*) *and in the World you ſhall have tribulation*, John 15. 35. You are as *Lambs among Wolves*; and is it ſtrange to ſee Wolves make a prey of the Lambs?

4. *Think not of ſuffering and affli-*

Ver. 12 *ction, as a ſtranger that you know not how to converſe with, or have any thing to do with.* There is a *voice* in every *Rod* (Mic. 6. 9.) Think not that it ſpeaks a ſtrange Language. Be not eſtranged from it, as from a language you underſtand not. Grow into familiarity with it, and you ſhall ſoon perceive it is an acquaintance, not a ſtranger; a friend, not an enemy.

5. *Speak nor think not evil of affliction and ſuffering.* Thus, thinking ſtrange, is interpreted, 1 *Pet.* 4. 4. For when the *Gentiles thought ſtrange* at the Saints, they *ſpake evil of them.* So they think ſtrange of the *Croſſe*, that think or ſpeak evil of it. And indeed that ſhewes that they are ſtrangers to it, and do not underſtand its Nature, End, and Uſe. It comes for no hurt, but for much good, and advantage. Though it be a *fiery Tryal*, yet it is onely to try, refine, and purifie you; not to conſume or deſtroy you.

you. When God ſent in the *Chaldeans* upon his People, and they had carried many of them *captives*; yet God even then acknowledged them like the very *good figs, his eyes were upon them for good*, &c. as it followeth, *Jer.* 24. 5,6,7. Ver. 12.

Uſes.

First, Information. *Gods thoughts in adminiſtring and ordering the ſufferings of his People, are as far above mens, as the Heavens are above the Earth.* First, his thoughts in this are far above the thoughts of his Enemies, whom he uſeth only as the Rod of his Anger, to ſeparate the droſs and corruption from his People. *Howbeit he meaneth not ſo* (as God meaneth) neither *doth his heart think ſo* (as God thinketh) *But it is in his heart, to deſtroy and cut off Nations, not a few*, Iſa. 10. 7. But ſee God's thoughts and intendments, *ver.* 17. 20, 24, *&c.* Secondly, His thoughts in this Uſe 1.

Ver 12. are far above even the thonghts of his own People. When God brought that long captivity upon them, *Zion* ſaid and thought, *The Lord hath forſaken me, and my God hath forgotten me.* But obſerve how the Lord opens his Boſom, and diſcovers in his own heart, other thoughts than were in their hearts, *Jer.29. 11. I know the thoughts that I think toward you, thoughts of Peace and not of Evil, to give you an expected end. Then ye ſhall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.* So in this particular reſpect, God doth not think ſtrange concerning the *fiery Tryal*, which is to try his People; neither are they by it eſtranged from him, nor he from them. And he is here, by the Apoſtle, laying the Law of his own heart upon ours, that we might learn to think his thoughts, and to ceaſe from our own, concerning all his dealings with us, in delivering us up into the hands of men.

Se-

Secondly, Exhortation. *If we are not to think ſtrange concerning the fiery Tryal, then let us keep our heart with all diligence, and be very ſeriouſly conſcientious of this duty, maintaining an inward awful watch, againſt all thoſe evil ſurmiſes, that fleſh and blood would ſuggeſt to cauſe us to take offence at the Croſs, ſo as to ſtrange at it, as though ſome ſtrange Nation brake in againſt us, or came to quarter upon us.* Tell me, What ſeek ye? Would you have a Chriſt without a Croſs? Do ye not ſeek and profeſs a Chriſt that dyed, that was accuſed, bound, and buffetted, that was ſcorned, ſcourged, and crucified? And if he did and endured all theſe things for you, would you not gladly be made partakers of the fruit and benefit of all theſe? And how think you to receive the benefit of all theſe, if you will in no meaſure be content to be made *comformable to theſe his Sufferings?* (Phil. 3. 10.) And how ſhall you be made comformable to Ver. 12. Uſe 2.

Ver. 12. to theſe his ſufferings, if you turn away from the *Croſs*, and refuſe to *take it up*, and decline all fellowſhip with it, accounting it a ſtrange thing, and ſo eſtranging your ſelves from it? Let us rather keep an ear open to that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Pet.* 4. 1. *Foraſmuch as Chriſt hath ſuffered in the fleſh, Arm your ſelves likewiſe with the ſame mind.* It is true, there was a time when this very *Peter* ſeems not Armed with the ſame mind, but accounted the *fiery Tryal* as a *ſtrange thing*, and ſtood aloof from it, and deſired no acquaintance nor converſe with it; namely, when (upon Chriſts telling him, that he muſt *ſuffer many things and be killed*) he took Chriſt and *began to rebuke him*, ſaying, *Be it far from thee, Lord; this ſhall not be unto thee.* But what ſaith the anſwer of Chriſt to him, *Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me: for thou ſavoureſt not the things that be of God, but the things that be of man*, Matth. 16. 22, 23. So that

that to think ſtrange at the *Croſs*, argues the mind to be in that reſpect, of an earthly and humane ſavour. But theſe were *Peters* firſt thoughts. But by his converſe with the *Croſs*, he came to be better acquainted with it, and now no longer counts it as a *ſtrange thing*; and he here in the Text gives us his latter, his reformed, and more refined thoughts and eſteem of it, and endeavours to implant the ſame mind in us alſo, ſaying; *Think it not ſtrange*, &c. And for our help in this duty, I ſhall adde, Ver. 12

Some Conſiderations furthering this Work.

1. *In lowlineſs of mind, let us make our ſelves (in our own eyes) of no Reputation.* We ſhould not think a ſuffering ſtate ſo ſtrange, if we were not ſtrangers to our ſelves. It is high-mindedneſs that makes us flye aloft above the *Croſs*. But lowlineſſe of mind helps to make us lye level and even with a ſuffering ſtate. A great and

Ver. 12. and proud man entertains the leaſt affront as a ſtrange and intollerable thing: but to a man that is poor (and withal humble) it is no ſtrange thing to be contemned aud deſpiſed. What ſtrange thing is it to have a Worm trod upon? So Chriſt made himſelf of *no Reputation*, and took on him the *form of a Servant*, and thereby lay level with the *Croſs*; and ſo it was more eaſie and familiar to him, to humble himſelf to death, even the death of the *Croſs*, Philip. 2. 7, 8. And the Apoſtle commands, that the *ſame mind* (in this very reſpect) *ſhould be in us, that was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus*, verſ. 5. When *David* (yea, and Chriſt in the perſon of *David*) could look upon himſelf as a *Worm, and no Man*; then it was not ſtrange, that he ſhould *become a reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people*, Pſal. 22. 6, 7.

2. *Seriouſly conſider the greatneſs of our ſins, and how much we have deſerved.* One thing that makes us think our ſuffe-

ſufferings great (and ſo ſtrange) is the looking upon our ſins and demerits as little. But the great Sufferings that were inflicted upon *Iſrael* in their long Captivity, are ſeen by *Ezra*, as ſmall, when ſin became greatned in his ſence of it. *All this is come upon us for our great treſpaſs.* He had then an entire proſpect of all that was come upon them: and yet ſeeing alſo how great their miſdeeds were, he acknowledgeth that God *had puniſhed them leſs than their iniquities deſerved*, Ezr. 9. 13. And he that ſhall be made able to be duely ſenſible of the greatneſs of his ſin, will rather think ſtrange that his ſufferings were ſo long withheld, or that they are not now much more, and greater than they are. Ver. 13.

3. *Seriouſly conſider the height of that hatred that is in the Devil and the World, againſt the People of God:* and how this is yet further heightned in many worldly-minded people, by thinking

Ver. 12. thinking verily, that they ought to do many things contrary to the Servants of God; yea, by thinking that they ſhall do God good ſervice in killing them: and then it will rather ſeem ſtrange that a *fiery tryal* was no ſooner kindled, and that it is now no hotter. To ſee a few Lambs among many hungry Wolves, Dogs, and Lyons, it will rather ſeem ſtrange that they are not all preſently eaten up and devoured, than to ſee now one fleeced, and afterward another rent and torn, and then another killed, *&c.*

Concerning the Fiery Tryal, which is to try you.

The *Greek* word, which we in *Engliſh* render by two words, *Fiery Tryal*, ſignifies, *a burning, a kindling upon*, or *a ſetting on fire:* And therefore (*Rev.* 18. 9.) this very word is there Engliſhed, *Burning*; The Kings of the Earth ſhall lament for *Babylon*, when they

they ſhall ſee the ſmoak of her *Burning*. The word that is there rendred *Burning*, is the ſame word that is in the Text here rendred *Fiery Tryal*. But the word is often and rightly uſed of ſuch a *Burning*, as is in a furnace kindled upon mettals, to try, refine, and purifie them: and therefore it is in this place well Engliſhed, *Fiery Tryal*, For ſo the next words explain it, that it is to *try them*; it is a *Fiery Tryal*, or *Burning*, that is kindled upon them to try them, as mettals are tryed in the fire that is kindled upon them. Hence, Ver. 12.

1. Note. *Chriſtians ſhould not think ſtrange at it, though God (for their tryal) put them as into a furnace, and there kindle a burning upon them, and cauſe them to paſſe under a fiery tryal.* In order hereunto, God kindles ſeveral heats or fires upon his People.

Firſt, *The hatred, hot diſpleaſure and indignation of man againſt them: when their wrath becomes kindled againſt them* (*Pſal.* 124. 3.) Wicked men are alway diſ-

Ver. 12. displeased and angry against the People of God: but there are also times, wherein their rage is, as it were, let loose, and enkindled into a more than common inflamation of spirit, from whence they breath out threatnings and slaughter, *Act.* 9. 2. Sure the heart is hot, when the very breath is threatnings and slaughter. Hereupon they make havock of the Church, are exceedingly mad against them, and even compel them to blaspheme: And this fire is sometime so universal, that it kindles upon every house, *Act.* 8. 3. and 26. 11. This was sometime *Davids* case, *Psal.* 57. 4. *My soul is among Lions, and I lye among them that are set on fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword.* There was nothing but death, cruelty and destruction in their words, wishes and threatnings. How came this to pass to be thus? why they were sons of men set on fire: Though they were but

but the tails of ſmoaking fire-brands (as it is ſaid of the fierce anger of *Rezin* and *Remaliah's* ſon, *Iſa.* 7. 4.) yet they were now ſet on fire, and caſt upon *David*, that they might ſerve as a heat to help on that *Fiery Tryal* wherewith he was to be tryed. For ſo we may enlarge and interpret it, from *Pſal.* 66. 10, 12. *Thou haſt proved and tryed us, as ſilver is tryed* (and that is by fire) *Thou cauſedſt men to ride over our heads; we went through fire, &c. God turned the heart of* Egypt *to hate his People,* (Pſal. 105. 25.) and then it became an iron furnace to them. Now if God ſhould try his People by this fire, if he ſhould ſhut them up under the hand and power of men, yea, the worſt of men, and then turn their heart to hate his People, and ſet them on fire againſt them; yet if they did clearly underſtand the Lord, and the thoughts that he thinks toward them, they ſhould the leſſe ſtrange at it. We do not think ſtrange to ſee the Gold- Ver. 12.

Ver 12. ſmith take the black ſooty Charcoal, and ſuch as a man cannot touch (except with a pair of tongs) but he is defiled, and to kindle theſe upon his Gold, which is his moſt precious and beloved metal: becauſe we know his meaning in it. It is not that he values his Coal above his Gold. The Coals are conſumed and burnt to aſhes, but the Gold is both preſerved and purified. So if we did clearly comprehend the mind of the Lord, and knew the thoughts that he thinks toward them (*thoughts of Peace, and not of Evil*) we ſhould not think ſtrange though we ſee him take even the ſons of *Belial*, that cannot be taken with hands; but the man that will touch them, muſt be fenced with iron; to ſee him (I ſay) take theſe and ſet them on fire againſt his moſt precious and endeared People; becauſe his deſign is not to deſtroy, but to refine his People. The deſtruction only befalls them that are thus ſet on fire: for

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so it follows in that Scripture (2 *Sam.* 23. 6, 7.) *They shall be utterly burnt with fire in the same place.* And again, (*Isa.* 26. 11.) *Yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.* Ver. 12

Secondly, *The enmity, hatred, and wrath of Satan against them.* This is a second heat that is sometime kindled against them to make up the *fiery tryal.* The Devil alway *goes about like a roaring Lion,* in fierceness and fury. But there are also seasons wherein he is more peculiarly said to *come down, having great wrath,* and in this wrath *persecutes the Woman that brought forth the man child.* Rev. 12. 12, 13. casts some of her seed into prison that they may be tryed (in the fire of that wrath wherewith he prosecutes them) and they have *tribulation ten dayes* by his means and procurement; and so it becomes more than a common tribulation, he helping forward the displeasure. Satan was alwayes an enemy to *Peter*; but there was a peculiar time

Ver. 12. wherein Satan had him, that he might *winnow him as wheat*; and then he inflames *Peter* againſt the *High Prieſts Servant to cut off his ear*, that they alſo might be the more inflamed againſt him. Satan was alſo alway an enemy againſt *Job*; But there was a time wherin it was given to him to be more peculiarly ſet on fire againſt him: And then he brings *down fire from Heaven upon his Cattel*; inflames the ſpirits of the *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans* againſt him; yea, of his *Wife and Friends* to burn againſt him; ſends *fire into Jobs bones*, and inflames his very *blood*, which broke out in thoſe *grievous and ſore boyls, from the crown of his head to the ſoals of his feet*; and above all theſe, he caſts his *fiery darts into his ſoul and ſpirit*; which made all the former heats the more intolerable. And in ſuch a *fiery tryal* was this righteous man proved. Now if God ſhould try his People by this fire alſo, and let even Satan *have them*, that he might thus

thus *perſecute and winnow them*; yet if they clearly underſtood the thoughts of the Lord in it, they would the leſs *ſtrange* at it. We ſhould not think ſtrange at the Refiner, when he hath kindled the Coals upon his Gold, if he ſhould then ſet an unclean Scullion, or ſome frightfull Black-amore to blow that fire, and to kindle thoſe coals into the higheſt inflamation that they are poſſibly capable of; becauſe we underſtand, that neither the one nor the other, can either corrupt or conſume the Gold: but the more the Coals are blown, the ſooner will they be conſumed, and the Gold refined. Chriſt hath ſpoiled *Principalities and Powers*, taken them captive, and they are now his ſlaves, to ſerve in the wrath: Their work is in this fire, and this fire will be their everlaſting wages. In alluſion whereto, he tells us (Iſa. 54. 16.) *Behold, I have created the Smith to blow the coals in the fire, &c.* And therefore when Ver. 12.

Ver. 12 mens wrath becomes kindled againſt the People of God, they ſhould not wonder, though (to make the furnace ſo much the hotter) this Smith, this *infernal Vulcan*, be appointed or permitted to blow the Coals in this fire, till they become wholly inflamed; that ſo, by the heat of mens perſecution, and the injection of his own *fiery darts* and *ſuggeſtions*, the heat may encreaſe upon them: for when his *wrath is great*, he knoweth *his time is ſhort*, (*Rev.* 12. 12.) And if we knew it too, we ſhould the leſſe ſtrange at it. And therefore though there ſhould be given to the Dragon and the Beaſt, *a mouth ſpeaking great things and blaſphemies*, whereupon he ſhould open his mouth, and breath forth *blaſphemy againſt God, his Name, Tabernacle, and them that dwell in Heaven*: though there ſhould be given him *power*, not only *over all Kindreds, Tongues and Nations*; but alſo *over the Saints, to make War againſt them*,

them, and to overcome them; yet ſtrange not at it: he is the Smith created to blow the coals in the fire, (*Rev.* 13. 5, 6, 7.) And therefore, if hereupon thou ſeeſt the *Oppreſſion of the Poor*, and the violent *perverting of Judgement and Juſtice*, marvel not at the matter, think not ſtrange at it: *For he that is higher than the higheſt* (in that work) *regardeth, and there be higher than they*, Eccleſ. 5. 8. This a ſecond heat. Ver. 12.

Thirdly, *There is ſometime added to the two former, a ſence of the diſpleaſure and indignation of the Lord himſelf likewiſe, who is a conſuming fire.* Such was the ſtate of the Church, *Mica.* 7. there was her adverſary inſulting over her, *Rejoyce not againſt me, O mine enemy*, (ver. 8.)' And ſhe was alſo at the ſame time under a ſence of the *indignation of the Lord*, in regard of her *ſin againſt him*, (ver. 9.) She had not only Men, and Satan (in their fury) as enemies: but he alſo *had bent*

Ver. 12. *his bow like an enemy, and ſtood with his right hand as an adverſary,* he had *poured out his fury like fire,* (Lam. 2. 4.) Himſelf from above *had ſent fire into her bones, and it prevailed againſt them,* (*Lam.* 1. 13.) So, the Lord, (againſt whom they had ſinned) *poured upon them the fury of his anger, and it ſet them on fire round about, &c.* Iſa. 42. *ult.* Now when all theſe three heats kindle together upon us, the burning and tryal muſt needs be very fiery. And yet, if we knew the Lord, and the thoughts that he thinks toward us, we ſhould no more wonder than to ſee that the Refiner, doth not only ſet his ſervant to blow the coals in the fire; but comes alſo near with his own mouth, and from thence poureth forth his own breath (as a river of fire) the more fully and effectually to kindle the Coals upon the Gold. And indeed the two former, are but inſtruments to this latter. The mouth of the Beaſt, and of the Dragon, are

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but as the Bellowes in the hand of the Refiner, through which he pours forth his own ſpirit of burning (like a ſtream of fire) to bring his Furnace into that juſt heat that he thinks moſt proportionate to refine and purifie his Gold. And therefore let us not *think ſtrange*, thongh all theſe concur to make up the *fiery* Tryal. For, Ver. 12.

Fourthly, *There is in and with this ſpirit of burning, a ſpirit of judgement alſo.* For ſo the *Lord waſheth away the filth of the Daughter of Zion, and purgeth the blood of Jeruſalem out of the midſt thereof, by the ſpirit of judgement, and by the ſpirit of burning*, Iſa. 4. 4. Like the Refiner, he knoweth what he doth, and what he deſigns in ſetting them thus on fire round about. It is not in him, like the fury of men, which darkens their jndgement, and makes men do they know not what. He well underſtands what he doth, and to whom he doth it, and by whom he doth it, and why he doth it;

Ver. 12. it; and this ſpirit of judgement (in great care and wiſdom) orders and manageth the whole proceſs of the burning from firſt to laſt, rightly judging when it is fit to put the Gold into the fire, how long it muſt lye there, to what degree of heat the Furnace muſt be kindled, and when the Gold is to be taken out. For he cometh as a Refiner to purifie, *Mal.* 3. 3. So that this burning is kindled by the Spirit of Judgement: they are not (when this Refiner hath to do with his Gold) ſeparated, but united. And ſo in and under this ſpirit of burning, there breaths and is poured out (as a River of Life) a Holy, Pure, Bright flame of Love and Light, whereby all proves but a Baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt and Fire, whereby the blood and filth alone is waſhed away and waſted, that ſo that which is incorruptible may be manifeſted. We may obſerve the great difference that is between the Earthly and Ce-

leſtial

leſtial fire. Our earthly fire which we daily kindle, doth both defile and deſtroy. Put a ſtick into the brighteſt flame, and you will preſently ſee how black it is. And if you continue it there, it is quickly conſumed. But now the Celeſtial fire is not ſo. For though the Sun daily pour out Rivers of heat upon the Earth, and upon the things that grow in it, yet they are none of them ſullied or defiled thereby: for it ſtreams forth upon them in a Pure, Heavenly, Immixed fervour. Neither is any thing that grows, conſumed or deſtroyed by it: for it is a vital heat, that Quickens, Preſerves, and Purifies all things. So, though in the *fiery Tryal*, God pour forth a ſpirit of burning, to conſume the Wood, Hay, Straw and Stubble that he finds in his People: yet in & with this alſo there is poured out a ſpirit of judgement, a Holy, Pure, fiery Love, which to every thing of his own, proves both vital (for it is the Ver. 12

Spirit

Ver. 12. Spirit of Life in Chriſt) and alſo preſervative, (for it is that fire with which every accepted Sacrifice is ſalted, Mark 9. 49.) Now though the former heats make it fiery, and burning: yet by means of this, it becomes onely a Tryal; *viz.* Purifying and Purging, not conſuming.

Uſes.

Uſe 1. 1. *Information.* The Conſideration of this may inform us:

Firſt, *In the Wiſdom of God.* He *is Wiſe* in his very *bringing evil*, Iſa. 31. 2. We count our affairs ſafe, when they are under the management of Wiſe hands: eſpecially when we know that thoſe things that ſeem to go croſs, were not onely foreſeen by them, but were alſo the contrivance of that Wiſdom by which our affairs are managed. It is ſo here in the whole proceſs of the *fiery Tryal.* There is not a Coal more in the

the Furnace than he knows of, nor Ver. 12.
any one of thoſe Coals more enflamed than he gives it to be: for they become enkindled onely by the *breath of the Lord, as by a River of Brimſtone.* He knows how many Horns, and Crowns, and Names of Blaſphemy, the Beaſt and the Dragon have: and allots them their time and continuance. All ſtand under his eye and obſervance; And therefore he is ſaid to *ſit as a Refiner*, Mal. 3. 3. He doth not careleſly caſt in and kindle the Coals, and then leave them to work at their own will in their own heat. But he himſelf ſits by the Furnace, to ſee that nothing happen to the prejudice of his precious Mettal.

Secondly, It informs us *in the Soveraignty and Supremacy of his Love and Care.* His Spirit of Judgement, his Holy, Pure, enflamed Love, overcomes the burning, and makes all a Baptiſm. *All things work together for*

Ver. 12. *for good.* All these heats work in their own natural destructive tendency and activity. And yet through the Supremacy of his Love and Wisdom, he brings forth and perfects Salvation by all. And so brings Meat out of the Eater, and out of the Strong, Sweetness: So that the Devourer becomes a Preservative.

Use 2. 2. *Exhortation*, and that in two respects:

First, Seeing there is such a *fiery Tryal*, wherein the very spirit of burning comes to kindle upon us, *Let us cry and pray that we may indeed be partakers of that which will abide in this burning.*

As, 1. Let us see that we our selves be founded upon the *Rock*, upon that *Corner-stone elect and precious*, upon which whosoever *believeth*, *shall not* (in the Day of Tryal) *be ashamed.* For the rain will descend, the floods will come, and the winds will blow. Rain and winds are from above, floods

floods are from beneath. And ſo they intimate, that Heaven and Earth, God and Man, yea, and the deep too, will put on and pour forth fury, to try upon what foundation we ſtand. And if in ſuch a Tryal, we be not found built upon Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall fall, and our fall will be great, *Matth.* 7. 24, &c. Now we come not to him to be built upon him, but by a departure out of our ſelves: by denying our own wiſdom, we come to that Wiſdom that diſcovers this Rock, and teacheth to build our ſelves (not upon our ſelves, but) upon him. By denying our own will, we come to enter into, and do that Will on Earth that is done in Heaven. And by denying any truſt in our own righteouſneſs, we come to that *Righteouſneſſe* that exceeds the *righteouſneſs of the Scribe and Phariſee*, which are part of thoſe ſayings of Chriſt, that we muſt *hear & do*, if we will be founded on the *Rock*. For this is the concluſion Ver. 12.

Ver. 12 sion of that Sermon, wherein these things are taught, as appears by the two former Chapters.

Secondly, Being thus built upon him, and united by Faith unto him, let us (in a holy hunger and thirst after the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness) labour to be partakers of him: that we may receive out of his fulness, *grace for grace*: that through the *great and precious Promises we may be partaker, of the Divine nature.* It consists not meerly in opinion or profession (though the most Orthodox) but in participation, wherein the *washing of the New-birth* is richly shed abroad upon us *through Christ Jesus*, Tit. 3. 5, 6. Herein do we receive of that incorruptible Seed, that abideth for ever, what ever *fiery Tryals* pass upon us (1 *Pet.* 1. 23.) Then have we *bought* of Christ, *Gold tryed in the fire* (Rev. 3. 18.) even something of that which (in himself) hath abode in all that *fiery Tryal*, that the

the wrath of Man and Satan ſet on work by the Divine diſpleaſure againſt him, made ſin for us, could kindle upon him. Then we come to that Righteouſneſs and Uprightneſs that can *dwell with devouring fire, and everlaſting burnings*, Iſa. 33. 14, 15. Then we receive of that *Faith, whoſe Tryal is more precious than that of Gold*, though it paſs a more fiery Trial than Gold doth (1 *Pet.* 1. 7.) Ver. 12.

Thirdly, Being thus built upon, and made partakers of him, let us take heed what we build upon him, that we may not loſe thoſe things that we *have wrought*, 2 Joh. verſ. 8. For it is fire that ſhall try every mans work of what ſort it is; and there are many works that like Hay and Stubble will be burnt away in the fire, and loſt; for which no reward will be received. Now, though the man himſelf (by fellowſhip with the Foundation) ſhould be ſaved, yet it will be great loſs to loſe the things

Ver. 12. that he *hath wrought* (2 Cor. 2. 11, to 15.) Now all ſuch works ſhall be loſt in the fire, as are not wrought in the Concurrence and Aſſiſtance of the incorruptible Spirit. For it is the Principle and Spirit from whence the work proceeds, that preſerveth the work. And therefore the Apoſtle ſpeaks not onely of our *being in Chriſt Jeſus*, but of *walking* [*in him*] *not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit*, (Rom. 8. 1.) And then ſo far there is no Condemnation, no not ſo much as to our works. Then are we *branches in him bearing fruit*, and every thing of the *fiery Tryal* doth but further purge us, *that we may bear more fruit* (John 15. 2.) Let us therefore be ſwift to hear that Exhortation of the Apoſtle (*Gal.* 5. 25.) *If we live in the Spirit, let us alſo walk in the Spirit:* that is, If we be ſo built upon the Foundation, as to have received of him of the Spirit of Life, let us in all our works, ſo reſign and deli-

deliver up our ſelves to be led by the Spirit, that it may (though by us) yet work all our works in us, and for us (*Iſa.*26.12.) *helping our infirmities*, and making *requeſt for us*, Rom. 8. 26. Ver. 12.

Secondly, Being thus, and doing thus, let us not at all ſtumble or take *offence at the Croſs*, nor *think ſtrange concerning the fiery Tryal;* But let us deliver up our ſelves to be (by the Spirit and Providence of God) led into it as ſtilly and quietly as the three Children did to be caſt into the *fiery Furnace;* yea, though it ſhould be heat ſeven times hotter than heretofore. The deſtructiveneſs that is in the fire, will be onely to thoſe and that, that is our enemy: But upon us it ſhall (as it did to them) onely burn aſunder thoſe bonds with which we are withheld from walking at liberty. They were caſt in, bound in their own cloathing (in their Coats, their Hoſen and their Hats) but the

Ver. 12. fire ſoon burnt theſe aſſunder, and they were quickly ſeen walking looſe. There are ſome things of our own, which we perhaps count as our covering and ornament; which yet are our bands. The *Fiery Tryal* is made hot, that it may the ſooner diſſolve theſe, and we may be brought forth *into the Glorious Liberty of the Sons of God:* and then the Word, or Son of God, ſhall be known and acknowledged among us; even that Voice of the Lord, which divideth the *flames of fire*, Pſal. 29. 7. There is in the *Fiery Tryal* a twofold flame of fire, *viz. a ſpirit of burning*, and *a ſpirit of judgment*; one that is deſtructive, and another that is vital and preſervative. The Voice of the Lord comes and divides between theſe two, and commands the deſtructive part to ſeize upon and devour only thoſe, and that which is againſt us, and the other only ſerves to purify the ſons of *Levi*, that they may offer an offering in righte-

righteouſneſs. And therefore let us not fear, *When we walk through the fire, we ſhall not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle upon us,* (Iſa. 43. 2.) but only upon that which is contrary to us. Ver. 12.

Which is to try you.

2. Note. *The deſign of the Lord in the whole fiery Tryal, is only to prove and try his People.* So *Zech.* 13. 7, 8, 9. When he *ſmites the ſhepherd, ſcatters the ſheep, and turns his hand upon the little ones, and cuts off two parts: it is that he may bring the third part through the fire, and refine them as Silver is refined; and try them as Gold is tryed.* So that the tryal of his People, is his doing with them, and to them, what the Refiner doth to, and with his Gold, in putting it into the furnace. Which may be exemplified in theſe following Particulars.

Firſt, In the tryal of Gold or Silver, there is made a tryal, and thereby

Ver. 12 diſcovery what droſs and feculent matter cleaves to it. Before the mettal is put into the fire, the whole lump appears as though it were wholly pure mettal: but now when it comes into the fire, that brings into open view a great deal of unclean droſſe, that before lay hid, and was not ſeen or diſcovered: And indeed, fire is the greateſt diſcoverer of latent impurities: and there is no impurity ſo hidden and ſecret, but the fire makes diſcovery of it. Take the pureſt fountain-water you can get: This ſeems ſo clear, that your eye cannot ſee ſcarce a mote in it: it looks as though there were no earthy dregs at all in it. But now, if you will try whether there be any impurity in it, bring it to the fire, kindle the fire under it, and then you ſhall quickly ſee, what an impure ſcum will ariſe. That feculent impure matter was in it before; but it lay hid till the fire forced it into open view. This is one part of the Tryal.

And

And therfore in the ſame verſe, where he ſaith, *The fire ſhall try every mans work*, he ſaith alſo, *Every mans work ſhall be made manifeſt*, and *It ſhall be revealed by fire.* So that Revelation and Manifeſtation are one great part of the tryal. So *Iſa.*4.4. They ſeemed to be *Daughters of Zion* (and that is a Virgin, as one *pure and immaculate*, *Iſa.* 37. 22.) and they ſeemed to be *Jeruſalem* (the Viſion of Peace.) But now when the ſpirit of judgment and burning comes to be kindled upon them, then appears that *filth* that before lay hid in the midſt of this *Virgin Daughter of Zion:* and then appears Blood (the effect of War and Cruelty) in *Jeruſalem* (the Viſion of Peace.) Though *David* had profeſſedly diſcharged viſible *Wickedneſſe and Wicked men*, Pſal. 139. 19. and *hated them that hated God*, (ver. 21.) Yet after this he opens and expoſes his very heart and thoughts to a further ſearch, diſcovery and tryal, than Ver. 12.

Ver. 12. he could make of himself, left there should yet be any way of wickedness in him that had escaped his own scrutiny, (ver. 23, 24.) For every one that is *clean in his own eyes, is not* therefore *cleansed from his wickedness*, *Prov.* 30. 12. And though the Apostle *knew nothing by himself, yet was he not hereby justified*, 1 Cor. 4. 4. And in that tryal of his visible Flock, mentioned, *Zech.* 13. 8, 9. two parts of three are discovered to be drosse, and only a third part abideth and is made to passe through the fire. And there are indeed in men, three things.

1. There is something of the venom of the Serpent, something of his seed that he hath spawned into our nature. 2. There is our own flesh and blood, with its wisdom, wills and wayes, which doth not inherit the Kingdom of God. 3. There is something of the gift of God, of the grace received out of Christs fulness. Now there are some remainders of the two for-

mer parts that often eſcape undiſco- Ver. 12.
vered in the firſt conviction, and lye Uſe 2.
hidden under that form of godlineſs that men then cloath themſelves with. But now when God comes to put men into the furnace, then there is made yet a deeper diſcovery of the hidden things of unrighteouſneſs. For inſtance, When God comes to pull away the world from men, then there often appears to be in them a ſecret cloſe love to the world, which is manifeſt in their impatient unwilling parting with them. And ſo a greater averſneſs and enmity to the Croſs, a ſecret diſtruſt and unbelief, not able to live in naked dependance upon the Lord, and the like. Now this is one work of the *Fiery Tryal*, to try what droſs ſtil remains, and to make a deeper diſcovery of thoſe hidden evils and impurities, that yet lye unſeen in us.

Secondly, It doth not onely diſcover what droſſe ſtill remains in the mettal; but alſo divides and ſepa-

rates

Ver. 12. rates between the one and the other. For, before the Gold comes into the fire, the droſſe and the mettal lye mixed together in one lump or conſiſtence: but now the fire burns in ſunder, that unſeen band, by which they were bound up together into one conſiſtence, and ſo looſens them each from other, and parts them, whereby they become two ſeparate diſtinct things. Though the mettal were before digged & taken out of the Mine, and ſo ſeparated from the vaſt lump of the common earth, and now taken into the Refiners houſe, as his own peculiar treaſure and poſſeſſion, upon which he ſets an high value: Yet he knows there ſtill cleaves to it ſomething of the earthyneſs of that firſt Mine from whence it was taken, and that thereupon it is not yet fully fit for his uſe, till he hath alſo ſeparated between it and the remaining droſſe. So, though Chriſtians in their firſt turn to God, be as it were taken out of the

vaſt

vaſt lump of the commou corrupt nature, and the world; and be thereupon received into the Church and Houſe of God, as a part of his peculiar treaſure: yet he ſees that there is ſtill remaining in them a tincture and ſavour of that firſt earthineſs and impurity, whereby they are not fully fit to be made *Veſſels meet for the Maſters uſe.* Therefore he brings a *fiery tryal* upon them, that ſo he may yet further diſſolve the remainders of that ſecret league and covenant between Death and Hell, that they may be yet more deeply, inwardly, and fundamentally looſned from all their cloſe and unſeen impurities. Ver. 12

Thirdly, The droſs is thus diſcovered, and divided from the mettal by the fire, that it may be removed and taken away, and ſo the Gold remain entire of it ſelf, without any heterogeneous mixture to corrupt or pollute it. And though when the fire hath firſt looſened the droſs from the

Ver. 12. the mettal, and ſo brought forth into manifeſtation the impure part that lay hid in it before; though (I ſay) the mettal ſeem then more impure than it appeared to be before: (For perhaps it was bright and ſhining when it was firſt caſt into the fire, but now it lyeth apparently covered with the droſs) Yet the Refiner doth not account this mettal the more impure for this, but is rather glad that the impurity is ſo come forth that now it may be removed, and ſo he may have nothing for his work but pure Gold. And ſo again, Though the water ſeem clear when it is firſt ſet on the fire, yet the fire makes the ſcum to riſe; and it appears as though the fire had defiled or polluted it. But this is no new contracted pollution, that it got by being brought to the fire; but only an hidden, unſeen filth put forth and brought into open view, that ſo it may be ſcummed off and taken and caſt away: this is only for the clarifying

ing of the water. And ſo yet again: When your ſervant goeth to ſcour a brazen veſſel (as a kettle or the like) the wiſp ſhe takes to ſcour it, is clean; the water wherewith ſhe wets that wiſp, is clean; and the aſhes ſhe makes uſe of, are white. And yet after ſhe hath ſcoured a while, your veſſel is more polluted, and more unfit for uſe in that ſtate, than it was before ſhe began to ſcour it. For now all the filth that clave to the veſſel in ſcattered parts, is rubbed off: and though it ſeem to be more unclean than before, yet is it indeed nearer cleanſing than it was before, and nearer being fit for the Maſters uſe than it was before. For the impurity that now appears, being now looſned from the veſſel, is with a ſlight rinſe or daſh of water ſeparated from it, and carried away. Juſt ſo it is here in the *fiery tryal*. When God takes his People, and puts them into the furnace, many ſecret hidden impurities of ſpirit manifeſt Ver. 12.

Ver. 12. nifeſt themſelves, which perhaps never appeared in them before: not that they were not indeed in them before, but they were not diſcovered before, ſo as now this *fiery tryal* manifeſts them. For this fire is blown by that *Word and Spirit of God that is ſharper than any two-edged ſword, and pierceth to the dividing aſunder of the ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joynts and marrow; and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*; neither is there any *creature* (nor any thing in the *creature*) that is not manifeſt in his ſight; *but all things are naked and open* unto the eyes of *Him* with whom we have to do in this fiery Tryal (*Heb.* 4. 12, 13.) juſt as a beaſt is, when he is not only opened, but chined and cut down the back-bone, as the word there uſed doth import. Take Iron that is ruſty, bring the Fyle upon it, and you may therewith fyle off all the ruſt, and brighten and polliſh it: but now the fire goes further, and diſcovers

vers and fetches out a more groſs and earthy droſſe than was in the ruſt. We are in our firſt turn to the Lord, as under the fyle; but becauſe he will have us *ſanctified throughout in ſpirit, ſoul & body*; he plungeth us into *a Baptiſm of the ſpirit of judgment and burning*: and this brings forth the filth and blood that is in the very midſt, in the inmoſt receſs of the Daughter of *Zion*: and then a man is apt to think that he is really more unclean, and more unmeet for God than ever he was. But this is but the bringing forth of that which lay hid before, that ſo it may be taken away: This is but the riſing of the ſcum that it may be taken off: that theſe *two parts* may be *cut off*, (*Zech.* 9.) that this *filth and blood* may be *waſhed away* (*Iſa.* 4.4.) This doth but (as the ſcouring of the veſſel) gather together the impurity that lay ſcattered and undiſcovered before. And though now it appear more than one could think for, yet now the Ver. 12.

impu-

Ver. 12. impurities are put forth, and ſo more eaſie to be carryed off: and it is but ſprinkling them with clean water, and they become cleanſed from all their *Iniquities and Idols*, Ezek. 36. 25. This is a third thing in the Tryal, whereby it is tryed whether the cloſe Impurities may be taken away, and it is found that by the Spirit of Judgment and Burning, they may be removed, *Iſa.* 27. 9.

Fourthly, The *fiery Tryal* of the Gold, doth not onely diſcover and remove the droſs, but alſo melt the Gold it ſelf. Before it went into the Furnace, it was not only mixed with hidden impurities, but was alſo in a hard conſiſtence, a ſolid Mettal, and ſo not ſo apt with eaſe to be wrought into any form according to the will of the Gold-ſmith. But now in the Furnace it becomes not onely purified, but melted; and ſo is brought into ſuch a condition, that it may now with eaſe be poured out and caſt into

into any form that the Founder pleaſeth, to make either a Ring, or any other Veſſel that himſelf pleaſeth. So the *Fiery Tryal* is brought upon us; that it may bring about this part of the Tryal in us, namely, to ſoften and melt us, that we may readily and eaſily receive any form that he pleaſeth to caſt us into, that he may make of us, and do with us even what himſelf pleaſeth. And this entire Reſignation and Subjection, is that Obedience which we learn by the things that we ſuffer, as is witneſſed even of Chriſt himſelf in his *Fiery Tryal*, Heb. 5. 7, 8. Before we enter into the Furnace, we are many times hard and ſtiff in our own will, not to be wrought upon, nor framed into what the Lord would have us to be. So it was with *Iſrael*, Jer. 9. 4, 5. *They will utterly ſupplant each other, they will walk with ſlanders, they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not ſpeak the truth.* Now he comes to conſult and ask, (verſ. 7.) Ver. 12.

Ver. 12. *How ſhall I do for the Daughter of my People?* What ſhall I do for or with ſo ſtiff and wilful a People? And he there reſolves that he would *melt* them and *try* them: He would deal with them as Founders do with their Mettals, namely, melt them and thereby reduce them into ſuch a ſoft conſiſtence, that they might be made plyable and yielding to any form that he pleaſe to caſt them into. And this melting doth not only looſen and bring into ſuch a plyable and ſoft conſiſtence, the outward part of the mettall alone, but it is a through-work, and the inmoſt part of the mettall is as yielding as the outſide. So God kindles the *Fiery Triall* upon his people, that he may thereby looſen and ſoften the moſt inward hidden hardneſs, that every thought may be carried captive into the obedience of Chriſt. And therefore this *Fiery Triall* works within as well as without, which the Greek in the text fully intimates,

mates, saying, *Think it not strange concerning the Fiery Triall in you, which is to try you, or which happens to you for Trial,* to prove if you may be thus dissolved and melted down by the presence of the Lord, and so made more capable of having his will impressed upon you. Ver. 12

Uses.

First, *Information.* This informes us, *that the designe of the Lord in the hottest Fiery Trial, is not to destroy us but to try us, it is not to consume but refine us.* Love is the principle of it, wisedome and care manageth it, and therefore nothing but good can be the end of it: our own feares suggest worse than his love intends. Use 1.

Secondly, *Exhortation. Let us as the Lord cals us to it, meekly deliver up our selves to have the whole process of this Triall pass upon us.* As, Use 2.

1. Let us consent to have (by it) our most inward and hidden impuri-

Ver 12. ties brought to light, to be manifeſted and revealed by this ſpirit of judgement and burning; *David* begs for it (*Pſal.* 139. 23.) Let us admit of it, and ſubmit to all means that contribute to the effecting of it. How ſhall the droſs be removed if it be not manifeſted by the fire? How ſhall the ſcum be taken off, if it do not riſe? And what will make it riſe, but the fire?

2. When the Lord kindles any of the foreſaid heats upon us, let us then more peculiarly open and expoſe our hearts toward him, that his Spirit of Judgment and Burning may have a free acceſs into us, and effect this *Fiery Tryal* in us, to the diſſolving of that cloſe hidden League, Love, and Covenant, that we have made with Death, or any thing of Hell and Sin. That thoſe fleſhly earthly affections, whereby our ſouls are at all engaged to the world and luſts, may be burnt in ſunder, that ſo we may ſpring forth into

into the *liberty of the Sons of God.* Ver. 12.
Elihu ſpeaking with relation to that *fiery Tryal* that had paſſed upon *Job*, ſaith, God doth it, *that he may withdraw man from his purpoſe, and hide pride from man, and ſo keep back his life from the Pit*, &c. (Job 33.17,18.) Pride is not hid from man till he is withdrawn from his own purpoſe, from what he propoſeth to himſelf, and purpoſeth in himſelf. We truly ſee nothing but what we are united with and joyned to. For there is a union between the Object and the Faculty, where there is any true ſenſe of it. And therefore we are ſaid to be eſtranged from the life of God, till we are quickened by it, and united to it. And ſo *Adam* knew not evil till he had eaten of the forbidden fruit, and ſo became one with it. And therefore, as ever we would have our iniquities covered, and our ſins hid, we muſt ſubmit to have thoſe luſts and affections, in which we and ſin

Ver. 12 are one, to be mortified, that ſo the League and Union may be diſſolved: And this, as alway, ſo more particularly in a time of Tribulation and Tryal.

• 3. As our Iniquities (come in the Tryal) to be diſcovered, ſo let us be willing to let go this droſs. As the ſcum riſeth, ſo let our cry be to the Lord, that he that hath kindled the fire that diſcovers it, would alſo take it & remove it far away from us. That the *ſpirit of judgement and burning*, that hath brought forth the *filth and blood* that was in the middeſt of us, would *waſh it away*. That the *two parts* might be *cut off* and dye by the Circumciſion and Mortification that is made without hands, to the very *putting off the body of the ſins of the fleſh*, and all *ſpiritual wickedneſs*; that ſo we might be carried on *cleanſing our ſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of the Lord.*

4. Let

4. Let us learn Obedience by the things we ſuffer. Let it be our deſire and joy to be even melted in the *fiery Tryal*; to be reduced into ſuch a ſubjection and reſignation, that we may lie before the Lord as the melted mettal before the Founder, to be poured forth into what form he pleaſeth: or as Clay before the Potter, to be made up into a veſſel of what faſhion, and for what uſe he pleaſeth; that he may do with us, and take from us, and lay upon us what he pleaſeth, that he may be, and do, all in all in us. Then ſhall we ſee that *no ſtrange thing hath happened to us.* Ver. 12.

As though ſome ſtrange thing happened to you.

Implying, that when the *fiery Tryal* comes upon us, and works any of the foreſaid effects upon us, we ſhould not be affected, *as though ſome ſtrange thing happened to us*; or, as though ſome

Ver. 12. one, ſome ſtranger happened to come upon us: for ſo the word here may be rendred, as well of a ſtrange one, or a ſtranger, as a ſtrange thing. And the word alſo in the beginning of the Text (which we Engliſh, *Think not ſtrange*) doth in its firſt and immediate ſignification, refer to that entertainment that we give to a ſtranger, or one that we have no acquaintance with, coming upon us by ſurprize and at unawares. We may take it in both conſiderations thus: That we ſhould not think of the Croſſe and fiery Tryal, as of a ſtrange thing, *as though ſome ſtrange thing happened to us;* nor of the Lord (the Refiner) that comes to kindle this Fiery Tryal upon us, as of a ſtrange one, or a ſtranger, with whom we have no acquaintance; but ſhould be affected as a people that do know, and can acknowledge him, even in this *Fiery Tryal*; and therefore with readineſs of mind, and heartineſs of good-will, receive and entertain

tain him, even in this his fiery diſpen- Ver. 12.
ſation. So that in theſe words, are hinted to us, theſe three following Inſtructions and Exhortations.

Firſt, *Strangers and ſtrange things, are ſuch perſons and things, as we have no knowledg of, no acquaintance with.* Now when the Lord comes with his *Croſſe* to viſit us, let us not look upon him as a *ſtrange one*, or it, as a *ſtrange thing*. Sometime an ancient Friend comes ſuddenly upon us, whom we have forgotten; and at the firſt ſight we are ready to account him a ſtranger: but upon further conſideration and diſcourſe, we come to remember that he is an old acquaintance, one that hath been our Friend, and our Fathers Friend, and then we are willing to renew our old acquaintance with him. So *Chriſt* and his *Croſſe*, many times at the firſt approach, ſeems a *ſtrange one*, and a *ſtrange thing* to us: But upon further conſideration and converſe, we ſhall find that both him and it, and

he

Ver. 12. he in it, have alway been the Churches conſtant acquaintance, though a little late eaſe, peace and proſperity, may have made us for the preſent to have forgotten both him and it. And therefore the Exhortation tends to this purpoſe, That we ſhould deſire and endeavour to renew our acquaintance both with it and him. Shall we only take acquaintance of a friend when he comes in apparrel of our own faſhion, or in cloaths that are rich and gay; and diſclaim him as a ſtranger, if he come in poor habit, or in mourning? This were to be better acquainted with his apparrel than with his perſon. They that are well acquainted with a man, will know him in any habit, though in a diſguiſe. So, ſhall we only own and take acquaintance with Chriſt, when he comes accompanied with comforts, peace, plenty, eaſe, and ſuch accommodations as are ſuitable to us; and yet account the ſame Chriſt a *ſtranger* when he comes with his

his *Croſſe*, and (as a Refiner) with his *fire?* This ſpeaks ſmall acquaintance with himſelf. To think to *receive only good at the hands of the Lord, and not to receive evil*, is to think as the fooliſh women, (*Job* 2. 10.) *that are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of him that is the Truth*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 7. The Apoſtle was of another mind, while he determined to *know nothing* among the *Corinthians*, but *Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified*, 1 Cor. 2. 2. which is *knowing him in the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, by being made conformable to his death*, Philip. 3. 10. And therefore if he in this habit come as a ſtranger to us, ask him, and he will acquaint you who he is. So doth the Church, *Iſa.* 63. 1. *Who is this? and wherefore are thy garments red?* And he anſwers them in both: *I am he that ſpeak in righteouſneſs, and am mighty to ſave.* Only I have enemies that are both againſt me and you, and I came in this complexion of death and fury, Ver. 12

that

Ver. 12. that I might deſtroy them, and deliver you.

Secondly, *Strangers and ſtrange things, are ſuch as (being not acquainted with) we are apt to be jealous of, as miſtruſting they come for no good, but rather that they have ſome deſign upon us, or ſome intent againſt us for evil; and therefore we would gladly be rid of them.* And in this reſpect the Exhortation ſpeaks to this purpoſe, That when the Lord comes to viſit us in, and by a *fiery Tryal*, we ſhould not be haſty to entertain hard thoughts of him or it, as though he intended, or had any deſign of evil againſt us, or as though any harm ſhould befal us by it. The Refiner intends no harm to his Gold when he kindles a fire upon it. No man that ſeeth it, is ſo offended at the Refiner as to ſay, What doth the man mean? What, will he burn up and conſume ſuch precious mettal! No, he would not do it if he knew or ſuſpected, that it would deſtroy, or

in

in the leaſt hurt his Gold. Both he and they that ſee him, are better acquainted with him and his deſign. They know the Gold cannot be conſumed: it is only the droſſe againſt which the fire prevails. And if we had this acquaintance with God, we ſhould be at *peace with Him* (even when he appears as an enemy againſt us) and thereby *good ſhould come unto us*, as *Eliphaz* inſtructeth *Job* in relation to his *fiery tryal*, *Job* 22. 21. And therefore, upon a better acquaintance with the *Croſſe*, we ſhall come to know *that it is for good*, *Jer.* 24. 5, 6. *Heb.* 12. 10. And the being experimentally acquainted with this, is that *good judgment and knowledge*, (Pſal. 119. 66.) namely, the knowing that *God in afflicting* (verſ. 67.) *is good, and doth good*, (ver. 68, 71.) *and deals well with his ſervants*, ver. 65. Ver. 12.

Thirdly, *Being through unacquaintance, jealous and miſtruſtfull of ſtrangers, we cannot readily receive and bid them*

Ver. 12. *them welcome. Though we in compliment ask them to ſtay, yet we had rather they would paſſe away from us.* But now a Friend, though his ſtay will eat up, and occaſion an expence of the beſt proviſion we have, yet we heartily bid him welcome, and earneſtly invite him to ſtay. So when the Lord comes with his Fiery Tryal, we are too apt to think him a *ſtrange one*, and the Croſſe a *ſtrange thing*, as though he dealt ſtrangely with us. But the Apoſtle exhorteth here to ſuch intimate acquaintance with the Croſſe, and with the principle and deſign of the Lord in it, that we might even heartily invite, and with a ready mind receive him, though he came to deal with us, as the Refiner with his Gold: That we might be ſo well acquainted with him in this work, as they were who would not *accept of deliverance, that ſo they might receive a better Reſurrection*, Hebr. 11. 35. As thoſe that would not

not let him go, though he ſeem in- Ver. 12.
clinable to it. They ſhould have had a good Reſurrection, though they had (upon terms of Righteouſneſſe) accepted deliverance. But they knew that out of this furnace they ſhould receive a better, and riſe in greater brightueſs, purity, and glory. And therefore this is one thing (among others) that ſhall find a peculiar remembrance and acknowledgement at the laſt day, that even in theſe Diſpenſations wherein he was a *ſtranger, they took him in*, Matth. 25. 35. Let us go and do likewiſe, *Amen.*

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1 Pet.

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1 PET. 4. 13.

But Rejoyce, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christs Sufferings; that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

But Rejoyce.

IN the former Verse, the Apostle had exhorted them, not to *think strange concerning the fiery Tryal*, not to behave themselves toward the *Cross* and *Suffering*, as toward a *Stranger*, one of whom they are jealous, and afraid, as with whom they have no acquaintance or familiarity, and so mistrust upon what errand or design he comes: But rather to entertain and take acquaintance of it, and grow more and more into familiarity with it. And now (in this Verse) he comes in his *Exhortation* to carry them on to a further attainment; namely,

namely, *to rejoice in it,* as one would in an endeared Friend whom we heartily entertain and bid him welcome with gladneſs. Ver. 13.

Note. *Chriſtians ſhould be ſo well acquainted with Sufferings, as to rejoyce in them.* The *Croſs* is to be taken up and carried, not only with Patience, but Cheerfulneſs. Therefore are they joyned together, *Coloſſ.* 1. 11. *All Patience and Long-ſuffering with joyfulneſs.* Here take notice of two things.

Firſt, *That rejoycing in Suffering, is a poſſible thing. It is that which hath been done by many.* The Prophet is fixed in a reſolution for it, that though there ſhould neither be Spring, Vintage nor Harveſt, and ſo neither Fig-tree, bloſſom, nor Vine or Olive bear, nor the Field yield any Meat: nay, though there ſhould be no breed among the Flocks or Heards; or if there were, yet though they ſhould all be cut off and carried away as ſpoil and plunder

Ver. 13. (for his Prophecy refers to the captivity by the *Chaldeans*, Chap. 1. 6) *yet I will rejoyce in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation*, Habak. 3. 17, 18. As if he ſhould ſay, though Heaven & Earth ſhould both arm againſt us, though the diſpleaſure of God and the wrath of man, ſhould together kindle upon us to make up a *fiery Tryal*, yet he is in and by theſe fires a God of Salvation, and even in theſe fires I will rejoyce and joy in him. And as he reſolved on it, ſo the Apoſtle practiſed it, Act. 5. 41. *They departed from the preſence of the Council, rejoycing, that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for his Name.* And *Paul* alſo writing from his impriſonment in *Rome* to the *Coloſſians*, tells them, He did then *rejoyce in his ſufferings for them*, Coloſſ. 1. 24. And in the ſame Chapter, verſ. 11. he *prayes* for them alſo, *That they might be ſtrengthened to all Patience and Long-ſufferance with joyfulneſs.* And therefore

fore it was not a State or Attainment peculiar to Prophets and Apoſtles onely, but was a Grace and Priviledge that (through Divine aſſiſtance) then lay, and in all ages hath lain, and ſtill doth lye, within the reach and poſſibility of Chriſtians in general. The *Theſſalonians*, though they *received the Word in much affliction*, yet it was alſo *with joy of the Holy Ghoſt*, 1 Theſ. 1. 6. And the *Hebrews*, though the Apoſtle tells them, that they were ſuch as *had need of Milk, and not of ſtrong Meat* (Heb. 4. 12.) yet they *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods* (Chap. 10. 34.) So that it is a State and Attainment poſſible to the loweſt condition of true Chriſtianity. And the Hiſtories and Experience of all Ages from thence down to our times, are filled with Clouds of witneſſes to this Truth, as may be ſeen in the *ſufferings* of the *Martyrs* in *Queen Maries* time, and will (I hope) be ſtill ſeen in our dayes, if Ver. 13

Ver. 13. occaſion be; For why ſhould we think that the Lord will be more wanting to thoſe that fear him, now, than he hath been in any Age hitherto.

Secondly, *Rejoycing in ſuffering is not only a poſſible thing, but a neceſſary duty. It is not only what hath been done by many; but is alſo that which ought to be done by all.* This is the expreſs Command of Chriſt, *Luk.* 6. 22, 23. *Bleſſed are you when men ſhall hate you, and when they ſhall ſeparate you from their company, and ſhall reproach you, and caſt out your name as evil for the Son of man's ſake. Rejoyce ye in that day, and leap for joy:* Let that day be to you a day of rejoycing. It is indeed matter and occaſion of mourning and lamentation to them that perſecute you: but to you matter of *joy*, and that in the Lord. And accordingly, the Servant of Jeſus, writing to the Twelve Tribes, ſcattered abroad, gives the like Command in the Name of his Maſter,

Jam.

Jam. 1. 1, 2. *My Brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations*, or tryals, even such, so many, and so great, as may give *patience* occasion to have *her perfect work* in bearing them. The equity, righteousness, and reasonableness of this Command, and of our Obedience to it, may be manifested in these following *Reasons*. Ver. 13.

Reason 1. *That ought to be matter of joy, that tends to the advantage of our graces. If to obtain and grow in grace, be the matter of our desire, endeavour and delight; then it is clear and certain, that that contributes to this end must needs have in it a true and real occasion of joy and rejoycing.* Now the Truth and Authority of the Spirit of God speaking in the Scriptures, doth plainly and abundantly testifie, That sufferings for Christ and Righteousness, do much advantage the interest of Grace. For, first, they help to work and beget Grace in us,

Ver. 13 *Rom.* 5. 3. *Tribulation worketh patience,* and thereby *experience,* and thereby *hope, that maketh not aſhamed.* Tribulation is in the beginning of the work, and hath an influence into the whole production following. Chriſt, though a Son, yet he learned *obedience by the things he ſuffered,* Hebr. 5. 8. His ſufferings were that diſcipline, in and by which the Father taught and inſtructed him in the paſſive obedience. So *Hebr.* 12. *The Croſſe and ſhame,* (ver. 2.) *The contradiction of ſinners,* (ver. 3.) *The reſiſtence to blood,* (ver. 4.) *The chaſtenings and rebukings of the Lord,* (ver. 5.) they all tend and have an influence toward the making us partakers of his *Life and holineſs,* (ver. 9, 10.) Not that ſufferings do formally and alone of themſelves work theſe things, but they are an Inſtrument in the hand of the Spirit of Grace, which he makes uſe of to the mortifying and ſubduing in us of that which withſtands the communi-

cation

cation of his Grace, and ſo prepares us as veſſels meet for the reception of his Grace. Ver. 13.

Secondly, Having thus contributed to the producing of it, they further work to the exerciſe of it, and ſo to the continuance and growth of it. Though a habit be gotten, yet if it be not uſed and exerciſed, it may be loſt again. As he that hath gotten and learned the habit of Muſick, or Writing, or any other skill, though he hath attained it, yet if he do not ſtill practiſe and exerciſe it, it will neither continue nor increaſe. Now Graces being as it were divine habits, God having by his Spirit, working in and by the Sufferings, produced them in us; he doth by the like means, exerciſe us in the uſe and practice of them; that ſo they may be both continued and encreaſed in us. So *Heb.* 12. 11. it is ſaid, *We are exerciſed by the chaſtening*: As Wreſtlers, or Fencers, uſe a frequent exerciſe of themſelves

Ver. 13. ſelves in thoſe things, that they may become perfected in their skill, and ſo when occaſion is, may have the Maſtery, and obtain the prize. Now Sufferings do naturally and neceſſarily draw forth Patience, Faith, Hope, Self-denyal, &c. into exerciſe: they contribute to the ſtirring up theſe Gifts of God in us, and draw them forth into employment and practiſe, whereby they become both continued and encreaſed in us.

Thirdly, By being thus exerciſed, they become alſo tryed and proved, that ſo they may be *approved*. So 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. The *fiery tryal* is to try us. And 1 *Pet.* 1. 6, 7. the manifold temptations are for the tryal of *Faith that is more precious than Gold*, 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7. Gold is then approved as right and fine, when it proves wholly incombuſtible in the fire. So Faith and other Graces, are then proved to be of an incorruptible kind, a part of the Divine Nature, begotten of an Immortal

mortal Seed by the Eternal Spirit, when they abide though a Fiery Tryal pass upon them. The true Uprightness can *dwell in Everlasting Burnings, and Devouring Fire*, Isa. 33. 13, 14 It was a proof that it was the Seed of the Kingdom, and also that the ground into which it was sown, was good ground, in that when the Sun arose with scorching heat upon it (as well as upon the thorny ground) that yet it withered not away; but was only ripened into further fruitfulness, by that heat which burnt up the other, *Matth.* 13. Now put all these together, and it must needs be yielded, That Sufferings which contribute to the producing, exercising, improving, trying and evidencing of our Grace, have in them true and real occasions of Rejoycings. Ver. 13.

Reason 2. *That which is any part of our blessedness and happiness, must needs be matter of Joy and Rejoycing. But now our Sufferings for Christ and Righteousness,*

Ver. 13. *teouſneſs, are a part of our bleſſedneſs and happineſs here.* It is true, there is to be a ſtate of Bleſſedneſs and Happineſs, wherein there ſhall be no more crying, ſorrow, ſuffering, or death. But one part of that Bleſſedneſs wherin we are made happy here, conſiſts in a fellowſhip with, and conformity to the death and ſuffering of Chriſt. And though fooliſh fleſh and blood, account and is ready to call it a great unhappineſs here, to fall into many and divers Tribulations: yet it is moſt certain and manifeſt, that a part of our preſent portion in Bleſſedneſs, conſiſts in taking up and carrying the *Croſs*. Chriſt himſelf (who beſt knew wherein Bleſſedneſs conſiſted) ſaith expreſly, that they *are bleſſed which are perſecuted for Righteouſneſs*, Matth. 5. 10. And again, (verſ. 11.) *Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile, perſecute, and ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſely for my ſake.* There are generally reckoned eight Beatitudes, or eight

eight ſeveral ſtates or conditions, that Ver. 13
Chriſt (in that Chapter) pronounceth to be Bleſſed. Now this of a ſtate of Suffering for him, is the laſt. And becauſe fleſh and blood was moſt ready to cavil and except againſt this, as though this were a condition in which there were no Bleſſedneſs: therefore this hath by Chriſt here a double Bleſſing beſtowed upon it, not only to prove the greater certainty of it (*Exod.* 41.32.) but alſo to hint, that there is the more abundant Bleſſedneſs in ſuch a ſtate, by how much fleſh and blood thinks there is none. And the Apoſtle and Servant of the Lord, is herein of the ſame mind with his Maſter, *Jam.* 5. 11. *Behold we count them happy which endure*; which endure as the Prophets endured (for their Teſtimony of the Word of the Lord) or which endure as *Job* endured (for the tryal and proof of his fear, uprightneſs and patience.) For this Happineſs is placed between both theſe Inſtances, as referring to both. Reaſon

Ver. 13. Reaſon 3. *That which is not only part of our Bleſſedneſs here, but alſo greatens our Reward and Bleſſedneſs hereafter, muſt needs afford in it ſelf matter of Joy and Rejoycing.* And that Sufferings do ſo, Chriſt himſelf aſſures us, *Matth.* 5.12. And therefore he there layes that as the ground of their *Rejoycing and being exceeding glad*, when they are perſecuted, not only becauſe the Kingdom of Heaven was *theirs*, but alſo their *portion and reward* in that Kingdom was great: and we may reſt in this his aſſurance. For he came from thence, and all judgment is committed to him, and by his appointment ſhall the ſeveral Manſions in his Fathers houſe be diſpenſed: and therefore he very well knows whoſe reward there ſhall be great. Hereupon it was, that ſome did not accept deliverance from their Tortures, that they might *obtain a better Reſurrection*, Hebr. 11.35. Being Believers, though they had been deli-

delivered, yet they ſhould have had a good Reſurrection; but that they might riſe to a better reward; they choſe ſuffering rather than deliverance. Now put all theſe together, and it muſt needs be granted, That that which advanceth the intereſt of grace, and is a part of our bleſſedneſs here, and ſerves to greaten our reward hereafter, cannot but have in it ſerious and ſolid occaſion of joy. For if we will rejoyce in any thing here, or any thing hereafter, we ſee ſufferings have an influence into both. Ver. 13.

Object. Againſt this, there may be Objected that of the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12. 11. *Now no chaſtning for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous, but grievous.*

Sol. 1. He doth not in thoſe words ſpeak of what they are in themſelves, but what they ſeem to be: they ſeem not to be joyous, or of or belonging to joy, but of or belonging to ſorrow, (as the Greek intimates) Now though

Ver. 13. though they may ſeem grievous to us, that is, things pertaining to grief, and to be grieved for: yet they may in themſelves, or in their uſe at leaſt, be joyous; that is, things pertaining to joy, and to be rejoyced in. Though winterly and rainy weather ſeems no cheerful weather, yet there are ſeaſons wherein it cheers the heart of the Husband-man to ſee it, and he can willingly at ſome time be contended with gladneſs to be ſoundly wet, in regard of the great good that it brings him in the main. So the time of weeping is beautiful (and ſo delightful) in its ſeaſon, as well as the time of laughter, *Eccleſ.* 3. 4, 11. And the Apoſtle (in that twelfth to the *Hebrews*) is purpoſely ſhewing the great good and uſefulneſs that really is in the chaſtening of the Lord. And knowing how ready fleſh and blood would be to reply againſt this, and not to favour it, he comes in this eleventh verſe, to ſhew, that though it

ſeem

ſeem *grievous*, yet it is indeed *joyous*, Ver. 13
for it works the quiet fruit of Righteouſneſs to them that are exerciſed thereby. And withal he doth by this comfort them: that if any ſhould ſay, yea, it is ſo indeed to them that rejoyce in it, and ſubmit in all long-ſuffering with gladneſs: but alas! to me it is ſo far from being ſo, that to me it ſeems grievous. I ſay, to comfort them againſt ſuch ſurmiſes, he ſubjoyns this, that though it ſhould for the preſent ſeem grievous to fleſh and blood, yet this ſhall not wholly diſappoint the fruit and good of it. For not onely that chaſtening that for the preſent ſeems joyous, but even that chaſtening alſo that for the preſent is (to ſeeming and ſence) grievous to be born, yet (notwithſtang that preſent appearing grievance) even that very chaſtening ſhall afterward work and produce the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs: and therefore, even that alſo is to be rejoyced in, in hope at leaſt,

Ver. 13. leaſt, though not in the preſent ſence of it. For there is a twofold joy concerning Tribulation, *Rom.* 5. 2,3. One is a joy in hope, in a hope that what ſeems at preſent grievous, will afterward bring forth ſomething for our good, and the glory of God. But (ſaith the Apoſtle) not only ſo, *but we glory in the Tribulation*, we find that preſent in it, that makes us not only joy in hope of what it will be to us, but even glory while we are in it.

Sol. 2. The Apoſtle in that place (*Heb.* 12. 11.) doth not intend univerſally to deny the preſent appearance of *joyfulneſs* to all in every chaſtening. In the Greek it is, *All chaſtening doth not ſeem joyous*: which rather implies, that ſome chaſtening (at leaſt to ſome perſons) doth *ſeem joyous*. So he himſelf *gloried in Tribulations*, and *rejoyced in his Sufferings* at *Rome*, (Col. 1. 24.) And he teſtifies of theſe very *Hebrews*, that they themſelves had taken *with joy the ſpoiling of their goods*,

goods, (Hebr. 10. 34.) And therefore their own experience could teſtifie, that ſome chaſtenings had in them (at ſome times at leaſt, and to ſome perſons) even a preſent appearance of *joyfulneſs*. Ver. 13.

Sol. 3. But though no *chaſtening* did for the *preſent ſeem joyous*, yet we are to conſider what that is to which it doth not *ſeem joyous*, namely, not to fleſh, and to that which is of man, which (eſpecially in the caſe of the Croſs) *favours not the things that be of God*, (Matth. 16. 23.) But to the Law of the mind, to the new creature, to that which is of God in the Chriſtian, there is a preſent appearance and ſence of *joyfulneſſe* in the *chaſtening*, becauſe that favours the reaſon and uſefulneſſe of it. And therefore even while the Outward man languiſhes, periſhes, and complains under the ſuffering, the Inward man is renewed day by day, and enjoyes and exerciſes a deep ſecret content and

Ver. 13. complacency, rejoycing in some taste and further hope of the Glory of God, not looking at *the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen*, viz. by the Outward man, 2 *Cor.* 4. 16, 17, 18.

Use.

Seeing that, Rejoycing in Suffering is a thing so possible, and a Duty so necessary, so reasonable & equitable, *Let the remembrance hereof abide with us, as a word of Exhortation, daily warning, and awakening us, to make toward, and come up to the performance of it.* If we will *live godly in Christ Jesus*, we are like *to suffer persecution*: & we shall not fulfill our Sufferings, nor undergo them, as becomes us, if we be not able in some measure to rejoyce in them. If we will *follow Christ*, let us not only consult, how we may decline and avoid the *Cross*, but rather prepare, and address our selves to *take it up*, and bear *it*; and that not only with *patience*, but also with *cheerfulnesse*.

Let

Let us not ſay, this is *a hard Leſſon, who can learn it?* There is one with us that doth teach us, and is alſo able to make us learn it. He for whom we ſuffer, ſuffers with us. He rejoiceth that we are made able and willing to ſuffer for him: and he alſo will (in this his joy over us) make us rejoyce in our Sufferings for him: Let but us conſent, incline, and apply our hearts to it, and he will *work in us both the will and the deed, of his good pleaſure.* And for our quickening and furtherance herein, we ſhall propoſe ſome Conſiderations, as Motives, and ſome Counſels, as Means hereunto. Ver. 13

Motives.

1. *While we are witheld from rejoycing in tribulation, we loſe part of our priviledge, part of that joy that by way of priviledge belongs to us.* We have ſeen in our times with what zeal and heat, men have contended for what they counted their priviledges: Now it is a part of the Chriſtians priviledge,

Ver. 13. to *rejoyce in the Lord alwayes*, in all ſtates and conditions. It is true, the fulneſſe and perfection of this priviledge, is reſerved for hereafter, when we ſhall enter into the *joy of our Lord*, and rejoyce in that *preſence where is fulneſs of joy and pleaſures for evermore*. But there is alſo granted as a priviledge to the Chriſtian here, to rejoyce in a very enlarged and extenſive joy, that ſprings up in, and to them, in every condition. It is the Chriſtians priviledge, not only to *know the truth*, (Matth. 13. 11.) but alſo to *rejoyce in it*, 1 Cor. 13. 6. not only to *pray*, but to be made *joyfull in the Houſe of prayer*, (*Iſa.* 56.7.) not only to *praiſe*, but to *praiſe with joyfull lips*, (Pſal. 63.5.) not only to *believe*, but alſo to be *filled with joy and peace in believing*, (Rom. 15. 13.) and to *rejoyce with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory*, (1 Pet. 1, 8.) And, as in other things, ſo in this alſo, it is not only given to the Chriſtian, as a priviledge

to

to *ſuffer for his ſake*, (Phil. 1. 29.) but alſo to *rejoyce* in theſe *ſufferings*, *Col.* 1 24. Why then ſhould we ſo far liſten to the reaſonings of fleſh and blood, as to ſuffer our ſelves to be diſappointed of that joy that is part of our priviledge? Ver. 1. 3

2. *While we are withheld from rejoycing in Tribulation, we fall ſhort of part of our duty.* For it is not only a priviledge allowed, but even a duty impoſed upon us, (as hath been before manifeſted.) And therefore, if we have reſpect *to all his Commandments*, (Pſal. 119. 6.) why ſhould we not have reſpect to this alſo? Why ſhould we not make conſcience of *rejoycing in ſufferings*, as well as of ſubmitting to them? And why ſhould it not as well be accounted a diſobedience and ſin, not to be *joyful* in them, as not to be *patient* in them? The ſame God that commands the one, injoyns the other alſo. And he hath commanded his People nothing but

Ver. 13 that wherein he intends to assist them in the performance of it. He very well knew what he commanded, and did perfectly understand their frame to whom he commanded it. Let us hope in him. We shall be able to do it and all things through him strengthening us.

Means.

1. *As ever you expect to be made able to rejoyce in Tribulation, so take heed of hearkning to the reasonings of flesh and blood.* It is that of which even improved Christians are in danger, and by which even such have been ensnared, and that very suddenly. *Peter* confesseth *Christ to be the Son of the living God.* Hereupon Christ pronounceth *him blessed*, and tels him, *that flesh and blood had not revealed this unto him*, but the *heavenly Father*; and makes known himself (thus confessed) the *Rock*, against which *the gates of Hell shall not prevail*; and gives *Peter* the *Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*,

ven, Matth. 16. 16,--19. And yet immediatly when Christ began to speak of his *Sufferings and Death, Peter* took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, *Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee:* Insomuch that Christ called him *Satan*, told him he was *an offence to him*, bid him *get behind him, for he savoured not the things that were of God, but those that be of men*, ver. 21, 22, 23. It is wonderfull to observe how suddenly *Peter*, (that had but just now been raised above the apprehensions of flesh and blood, into a Revelation of Christ from the Father) is entangled again in the fleshly savour, and by consulting with the carnal mind, comes presently to *stumble at the Crosse*, and to *put it far away*. And therefore as Christ here, bids *Peter get behind him*, that so he might not stand in his way by his carnal savour, to hinder or obstruct his prepared mind from passing on to the *Crosse*, that was now in Ver. 13.

Ver. 13. his view. So when any thing of the *Croſs* preſents it ſelf to us, we ſhould caſt all reaſonings of fleſh and blood behind our backs: for that (not ſavouring the things of God) will render the *Croſs* unſavoury to us (it can find no taſt in the fruit of that tree) and ſo prevent our bearing it either with *Patience*, or *Joy*. We ſhould rather conſult with, and ſet before us, what Chriſt ſaith, *verſ.* 24, 25. *If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelf and take up his Croſs.* And *whoever will ſave his life ſhall looſe it.*

2. *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the Love of the Father is not in him* (1 Joh. 2. 15.) And he that loves not God, can never truly do any thing for God, much leſſe can he endure any thing for him; and leaſt of all can he ever be able to endure it with joy. For joy in any thing ſprings from a love that we bear to ſomewhat that is in that thing: Now the

friend-

friendſhip of this world is enmity againſt God, (Jam. 4.4.) And that which is enmity againſt God, will withhold us from ever rejoycing in that of God, wherein the Spirit of this World hath no taſte or ſavour. And therefore Chriſt, when he is ſpeaking of ſuffering, upon the occaſion of *Peters* offence, he ſeaſonably adds this, *What ſhall it profit a man to gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul?* Mat. 16.26. implying, that in the caſe of the *Croſs*, the love of this world would much endanger the loſſe of our Soules, by enticing us (though by unrighteouſneſs) to decline the Croſs, and deny the Lord, that we might love our lives, and gain the world. And withall aſſuring us, that ſuch a gain of the whole World would not recompence the loſſe of one Soul: and we may bind upon the truth of it. Chriſt throughly underſtood the value and worth of Soules. He that hath traded in the purchaſe of any thing, is moſt likely Ver. 13.

Ver. 13. likely to know the worth of that thing. Now Christ came as a *Shepherd and Bishop of Soules*, to *buy us with a price* (1 Cor. 6. 20) And bought us at as low a price as the justice of the Father could afford us. And in this his purchasing of us, he found that *corruptible things* (as Silver and Gold) could not *redeem us*. Soules were things of higher worth, than to be purchased by all the World, & therefore it is not all the world that can recompence the loss of our Soules. Let us therefore more and more loosen our hearts from the love of the World, and endeavour to have them more and more fixed and enflamed in love to the Lord. So shall we be delivered from that which would otherwise hinder our suffering with cheerfulnesse; and shall be found in that from whence springeth *joyfulness* even in *tribulation*. But if we love the World, we shall rejoyce in it: and if we rejoyce in it, how shall we at all be able

able to joy and rejoyce in the losse of it. Ver. 13

3. *Endeavour to get a right understanding of the Cross, and Sufferings. Light and Gladnesse are Companions.* (Esth. 8. 16.) We should more easily rejoice in them, if we did more clearly understand them. This appears by the connexion of this Verse with the former: Count them not *strange*, but *rejoyce*: As implying, that we should surely rejoyce in them, if we were better acquainted with them. So *Rom.* 5. 3. *We glory in Tribulations also, knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience*; intimating, That his glorying in them, sprung from his knowing the working of them. And again, *Jam.* 1. 2, 3. *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the Tryal of your Faith worketh patience.* As if he should say, If ye did but fully know the fruit and work of them, you could not but account it all joy when you fall Psal. 79 11.

Ver. 13. fall into them. And here consider, that you may know them (among others) in these three following particulars.

First, In their Nature, what they are, *viz.* a participation of the *Sufferings of Christ*, as it follows in the Text; a *conformity to*, and a *fellowship with his Death*.

Secondly, In their Original, whence they are, *viz.* a *Cup* that the Father gives *to drink* (John 18.11.) A chastning from the *Father* of *spirits* (Heb. 12.9.) which he administers in *measure* and proportion (1 *Cor.* 10.13.) in *love* and *affection*, (Hebr. 12.6.) in *truth* and *faithfulness* (Psal. 119.75.)

Thirdly, In their End and Use, *viz.* to *purge and take away sin*, (Isa. 27.9.) to *try and exercise* that which is *good in us*, and to make us partakers of his own *Life and Holiness here*, and to greaten our *reward hereafter*, as was shewen before. Now if we clearly saw and knew these things, it could

not

not but enkindle a joy and delight in the inward man, even as to thoſe things that adminiſter anguiſh to the outward man. Ver. 13.

4. *Apply thy heart in a ſerious attendance to the Call and Command of the word, that requires this rejoycing of thee.* For Gods end in giving forth the Command, was not onely that we ſhould know what he requires of us, and expects from us: but alſo that he might by the Command convey the thing it ſelf to us, and work it in us. He hath given forth his Will, and that Righteouſneſs that is enjoyned, into the Command that enjoyns it. For God hath given forth all his Commands and Promiſes through Chriſt, who is his own eternally begotten Word, filled with all the fulneſs of God. And ſo being diſpenced through him, they come forth enriched with his fulneſs. Now then when the heart in holy Meditation and a preparedneſs of ſubjection and reſigna-

Ver. 13. resignation, draws nigh to, and humbles it self before the Command of God, the Lord doth by the Word convey and give forth the good thing it self, which the Command or Promise hath in it. So in reading this Command (*think not strange concerning the fiery Tryal, &c. But rejoyce, &c.* Set your selves before the Lord, and let your heart exercise it self toward him in this or the like manner. Lord thou here commandest that I should rejoyce in the fiery Tryal: I consent to this thy Command, that it is Holy, Just and Good. Behold, I open my mouth and pant toward thee, in longing for this thy Precept (*Psal.* 119. 131.) The good thing commanded in it, my Soul is after it, and thirsts for it. And therefore I here humble my self (as I am able) before thy Will & requiring in it. Overspread my Soul with this thy good Word, and by it impress thy Will into mine heart, that so the good thing required of me, may

may by thee, the Father of Spirits, be hereby brought forth in me. Ver. 13

5. *Prayer.* This was the means that the Apoſtle made uſe of, that the *Coloſſians* might be *ſtrengthened to all patience and long-ſufferance, with joyfulneſs*, Col. 1. 9, 11. And if he thus ſought it for them, then ſurely it was a proper means for themſelves to make uſe of. And in your ſupplications, beg for the joy it ſelf. And beg alſo for thoſe things that properly tend to it, and produce it. As for inſtance, That you may have the evidence of Juſtification and Reconciliation; for then follows the *glorying in Tribulation*, Rom. 5. 1, 3. Again, that you may be *ſtrengthened with all might, according to his glorious power:* for it is this that ſupports to the *Long-ſufferance with joyfulneſs*, Col. 1. 11. And ſo alſo, for the Spirit of *Wiſdom* and *Revelation*, in the *knowledge of Chriſt*; whereby you may know what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance

Ver. 13 ritance in the Saints, and so in your selves, *Eph.* 1. 16, 18. This made the *Hebrews* take with *joy the spoiling of their goods*, Hebr. 10. 34. not so much *knowing in themselves, that they had, &c.* as *knowing* that they had in *themselves a better, &c.* for so the Greek rather requires it to be read. So also, for the *encrease of Faith*, which was that by which they *suffered*, Heb. 11. the whole Chapter.

In as much as ye are partakers of the sufferings of Christ.

The Apostle had in the former words enjoyned them to *rejoyce* in the *fiery tryal*: And knowing how averse flesh and blood would be to this duty, he comes now to inforce the Exhortation by a double Reason: The one taken from the consideration of what the *fiery tryal* is to them at the present, viz. *A participation of Christs Sufferings*, as is expressed in these words.

words. The other, taken from the consideration of what it will be to them hereafter, at the revelation of his Glory, *viz.* an occasion of *being glad with exceeding joy*, in the following words. So that these words hold forth to us, the first of those reasons whereby the Apostle endeavours to make his Exhortation take place in them, namely, that therefore they should *rejoyce* in the *fiery tryal*, because they are therein and thereby, made *partakers of Christs sufferings*, or have communion in, and fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, as the Greek word intimates. Ver. 13.

Note. *The Sufferings of the true Christian, are a participation of, or a communion and fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, or with Christ in his sufferings.* Now the true Christian Sufferings are manifold and of divers sorts, *Jam.* 1. 2. 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. And yet he that is a true Christian, to him they are all a *participation of the sufferings*

Ver. 13. *of Christ.* We shall instance and evidence the truth hereof in these two following particulars.

1. *In Sufferings for Obedience to Christ.*

When that which is the formal, proper, and visible occasion of our sufferings, is somewhat wherein we obey Christ, either in the profession of him and his Truth, or in the practice of his Worship. When we either believe or practise what he hath enjoyned, or refuse, forbear and testifie against what he hath forbidden, and for so doing come to suffer, whether it be by reproach, restraint, pains, losse, death, or the like; then do we suffer for Christ, and for our obedience to him. It is for his sake we suffer: For if we could deny him, and withhold from acknowledging and obeying him, we might prevent these sufferings. Now in these sufferings, there is cause to *rejoyce*, in as much

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as in them we are *partakers of the* Ver. 13
ſufferings of Chriſt; For ſuch ſufferings are his ſufferings.

Firſt, *Interpretatively*, in as much as he ſets up all upon his own ſcore that is done to any of his, or for his ſake, be it good or evil, he accounts and reckons all that, as done to himſelf, and it ſhall receive the like recompence as if it had been done to himſelf.

1. Thus all the good that is done to, and for his, he accounts as done to himſelf, and will ſo account and proclaim it to be, in the day of his righteous judgment, *Mat.* 25. 35, to 40. He ſhall then ſay, *I was hungry, and ye gave me meat, gave me drink, took me in, cloathed me, viſited me, came to me in priſon.* Then ſhall the Righteous ask, *When ſaw we thee thus, and did thus to thee?* And the King ſhall anſwer, *Verily, I ſay unto you, Inaſmuch as ye have done it to one of the leaſt of theſe my Brethren, ye have done*

Ver. 13. *it unto me.* And the reaſon why, *A Cup of cold Water only to one of his little ones in his Name,* (which *Mark* 9.41. is, becauſe they belong to him) *ſhall not loſe its reward,* is, becauſe there is ſuch a relation between him and them, that he that *receiveth them,* is accounted to *receive him,* Matth. 11.40, 42,

2. Thus alſo all the evil that is done againſt them, he accounts it as done to himſelf. He that toucheth them (for hurt) toucheth the *Apple of his Eye, Zech.* 2. 8. And while *Saul* was breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter againſt the Church of Chriſt, he himſelf calls unto him, ſaying, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me? I am Jeſus, whom thou perſecuteſt, Act.* 9. 4, 5. He accounted himſelf perſecuted in the perſecutions of his People. And ſo at the laſt day, he ſhall declare to the *Goats,* that in as much as they did not ſuch and ſuch things to one of the *leaſt of his, they did it not to him,*

Mat.

*Mat.*25.45. Where note two things. Ver.13.
First, That Christ here in the presence of all Men and Angels, owns himself concerned in what is done against, though but One of his; Ye did it to One, and ye did it not to One: So that every individual Christian that is truly Christs, is in his particular and personal sufferings, partaker of the Sufferings of Christ. He acknowledgeth not only the sufferings of the whole Body to be his, but even the sufferings of each particular member. So that though one Christian should suffer alone, yet doth he therein partake of Christ's sufferings, they are his portion in those sufferings that Christ doth count and will call his. Secondly, This belongs not only to one, such as is an eminent Member in his Body, but to one of the *little ones that believe in him,* (Matth. 10.42. Mark 9.42.) yea, to one of the *least of his Brethren,* Mat. 25.40,45. So that there is not any one Christian,

Ver. 13 that is so in truth (though in the least and lowest attainment) but all his sufferings for Christ are a *participation of, a fellowship with the sufferings of Christ*, and so an occasion of *rejoycing*.

Secondly, Sufferings for Christ, are so, not only *interpretatively*, by Christs accounting them done to himself: but they are also *really and formally so*. For that which provokes, awakens, and draws on the persecution in this case, is somewhat of Christ and his Spirit, dwelling in me, and appearing and working, or witnessing by me. And the persecution, though it be granted to be primarily at my person, yet it is principally against that of Christ that appears in me. It is that against which they are more offended, than against the person of the Christian. Which plainly appears by this, That they could be at peace with the person, if he would deny, forsake and suppress that of Christ that manifests it self in him.

And

And therefore the man againſt whom they *imagine miſchief* (Pſ.62,3.)is to be underſtood of Chriſt. It is him onely whom *they conſult to caſt down from his Excellency* (verſ.4.) even him who is, *That Man* (Act.17.31.) *the Man Chriſt Jeſus* (1 Tim.2. 5.) And therefore he being the Butt that is principally ſhot at, and the perſon of the Chriſtian but ſecondarily and for his ſake, it muſt needs be, that the ſufferings are his, and that therefore in the enduring them, the Chriſtian hath communion and fellowſhip with Chriſt in his ſufferings. Ver.13.

Thirdly, The Chriſtians *Sufferings* in this kind, are a *participation* of the *Sufferings of Chriſt*, as being but a part of that which is behind of *Chriſts Sufferings*. So they are called, *Col.* 1. 24. *Who now rejoyce in my Sufferings for you; and fill up that which is behind of the Afflictions of Chriſt in my fleſh.* The Apoſtle was now Priſoner at *Rome* for the Teſtimony of Chriſt.

Ver. 13. And what he there endured, he calls his *Sufferings*, in the beginning of the Verſe (*who now rejoyce in my Sufferings*) becauſe they were undergone in his perſon. And yet he afterward calls them, *That which is behind* (or, as the Greek intimates, *The remainders*) *of the Sufferings of Chriſt in my fleſh.* Though he underwent them in his perſonal fleſh, yet they were the remainders of the Afflictions of Chriſt. For the better underſtanding whereof, take notice, That there was a Meaſure or Cup of Afflictions, given forth by the Father, which was to be drunk off by Chriſt and his People. This is that which is hinted, *Mark* 13. 30. *Ye ſhall indeed drink of the Cup that I drink off.* It was the ſame Cup of which he in his ſufferings drank, that they alſo were after to drink of. Now Chriſt in his perſonal Sufferings, drank of that meaſure and proportion of theſe Sufferings, that was appointed him, *John* 18.11.

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The Cup which my Father hath given me (to drink in my own perſon) *ſhall I not drink it?* But there is ſomewhat behind, there are yet remainders of theſe Afflictions of Chriſt, which are that meaſure and proportion of this Cup, that is ſucceſſively to be drunk of, by his whole Body. Chriſt did (as it were) begin, and each Member of his Body muſt pledge him out of the ſame Cup, and be Baptized into the ſame Baptiſm. Now as our drinking of the Cup of *Bleſſing*, is a *Communion* or *Participation* of the *blood of Chriſt* (1 Cor. 10. 16.) So when we drink of his *Cup of Suffering*, it is a *Communion* and *Participation* of the *Croſs and Suffering of Chriſt*. Ver. 13.

Fourthly, Such *Sufferings* are a *Participation of his Sufferings*, in regard that they which *ſuffer are his*; and ſo they *being his*, their *Sufferings are his alſo*. The ſufferings of any member of the body, are alſo the ſuffe-

Ver. 13. sufferings of the Head: and there is a mutual participation in the sufferings. The abuse and violence offered to our own Children, we take as ours, especially if they become subjected to those sufferings for our sake. And so we suffering in that wherein he also suffers, we are therein made *partakers of his Sufferings.* And these are the first sort of those manifold temptations, wherein we may *rejoyce, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's Sufferings.*

2. *Sufferings in obedience to Christ.*

Though a Christians Sufferings be not expresly and formally dispenced, and come upon him for his obedience to Christ; but providentially, the Lord so ordering it, that he becomes Afflicted in his Body, or in his Spirit, in his Affairs, Family or Relations, by reproach, pains, anguish, losses, disappointments, or the like; & perhaps hath in himself occasion to take

take notice, that ſome of theſe things come upon him as a juſt Viſitation and Correction, for ſomewhat is amiſs in him. Now if under all or any of theſe, he ſhall put his *mouth in the duſt*, and become *dumb*, *becauſe the Lord doth it:* if he can truly ſay with *Eli*, when he was threatened, becauſe of his ſin in not reproving his ſons, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth good in his own eyes*, (1 Sam. 3. 18.) If he can humble himſelf under the mighty hand of the Lord that is thus ſtretched forth againſt him, and (ſeeing it is the good-pleaſure of the Father that ſuch things ſhould thus befal him) can in obedience to the Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs of the Divine Will, meekly and patiently ſubmit to the dealings of the Lord with him; then are theſe ſuch things as we here mean by *Sufferings in obedience to Chriſt*: and a Chriſtian may even in ſuch chaſtenings be *partakers of the Sufferings of Chriſt*. For, Ver. 13

Firſt,

Ver. 13. First, Though Christ (in his own person) *did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:* yet his sufferings were not wholly without all respect to sin. His *Soul was made an Offering for sin*, Isaiah 53. 10. And again, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. Christ also *once suffered for sins.* It was sin (though ours) that occasioned his Sufferings. And in that it was not his own sin, but ours that occasioned his Sufferings; this makes us capable of *Participation in his Sufferings*, even in these things wherein we bear chastening for our sins, because we are in that case chastened for those things that were first visited upon him. *For all we like sheep had gone astray; and the Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all*, Isa. 53. 6. *And himself bare our sins in his own Body upon the Tree*, 1 Pet. 2. 24. So that Relation which our Afflictions have to our sins, doth not simply in it self hinder our fellowship with him in his Sufferings. But as he in those Suffe-

Sufferings, was brought as a *Lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a Sheep before the Shearer is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth; but gave his back to the Smiters, and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.* So if we in the like caſe can humble our ſelves in Meekneſſe, Patience and Obedience, to bear the indignation of the Lord, we ſhall herein be *partakers of Chriſts ſufferings.* Ver. 13.

Secondly, By this *Obedience*, *Reſignation* and *Subjection*, we conſent unto, and enter and ſink down into the Will of the Lord, and ſo are found in the exerciſe of the like obedience wherein he was in his *Sufferings.* We hereby alſo ſay, *Father, not my will, but thy Will be done.* And being thus in the exerciſe of ſuch an obedience, as that wherein he was found in his Sufferings, we cannot, in thoſe ſufferings wherein we are ſo (though our ſin might have influence into the occaſioning of them) be eſtranged from communion with him in his Sufferings. Third-

Ver. 13. Thirdly, Even these *Sufferings* thus undergone, are (in some sort) *Sufferings for his sake*, that is, for his *Wills sake*, viz. for that love and respect we bear, and for the sake of the subjection we owe to his *righteous and holy will in all things*. As out of a reverence and respect to his Holy Will, & a prefering his Will before our own, it is, that we submit to do what he commands: so we do on the same account submit to endure whatever he please to lay upon us, to give and deliver up whatever he please to take from us, and to be whatever he please to make us. Here now, though sin might be the occasion of these sufferings, yet love to him, and a reverential owe of respect to his Will, is the Principle of my thus obeying in them: it is upon this account that I thus humble my self, even to death, if such be the pleasure of his Will. And though it be for sin that I am chastened, yet it is for his sake that I thus

thus endure the chaſtening. And in Ver. 13
Sufferings wherein there appears ſo much of the complexion of his Sufferings, I cannot doubtleſs be uncapable of being *partaker of his Sufferings*.

Uſes.

1. *Information.* Firſt, To inform us, *wherin this Participation of Chriſts Fulneſſe conſiſts*. Where note two things. Uſe 1.

1. *That the true Chriſtian in all his ſufferings hath (or at leaſt may have) fellowſhip with Chriſt.* That it is not his ſufferings that ſeparate between him and Chriſt. The father takes the child to him, when ever he goeth about (upon any acconnt) to correct him: and the child is in the lap, even while he is under the rod. As there is a *being ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, (*Eph.* 6. 10.) So there is a *being weak in him*, a being in him *in fellowſhip with that weakneſs* wherein he was crucified, which yet tends to,

Ver. 13. to, and ends in, *a living with him by the power of God*, 2 Cor. 13. 4.

2. *That he hath not only fellowship with Christ, but fellowship with him in his sufferings*; viz. *In that peculiar way of fellowship.* The Apostle determined among the *Corinthians*, to *know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified*, 1 Cor. 2. 2. implying, that the knowledge of Christ crucified, is a peculiar knowledge distinct from the knowledge of Christ in general. So there is a fellowship with Christ crucified, that is peculiar and distinct from the fellowship and participation of Christ in general. Now there are in his sufferings two things, which they that are partakers of his sufferings, have fellowship and communion with. First, A worthiness or merit, a dignity that improves into a desert, that makes them carry the worth of a price for Redemption beyond the value of *Silver and Gold*, 1 *Pet.* 1, 18. Now the Christian being

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in, and by his ſufferings made partaker of Chriſts ſufferings, comes to have fellowſhip and communion with that merit and worthineſs that is in the ſufferings of Chriſt; and ſo he becomes herein (though not hereby, that is, not by and for his own Sufferings, but by and for the worthineſs of Chriſts Sufferings) counted worthy of the Kingdom of God. This is that wherewith the Apoſtle comforts the *Theſſalonians*, (2 Theſ. 1. 5.) That their *Faith and Patience in all their Perſecutions and Tribulations*, was a manifeſt token of the *righteous Judgment of God*; that he in righteous judgment, counted and judged them worthy of the *Kingdom of God*, for which they alſo *ſuffered*. Secondly, There is alſo in the Sufferings of Chriſt, a virtue, power and efficacy, which worketh even to a *victory and conqueſt* over him that hath the *power of death, the devil*, (Heb. 2.14.) And to the *crucifying the world to us, and us* Ver. 13.

Ver 13. *unto the world*, (Gal. 5. 14.) yea, to the crucifying of the *old man*, that *the body of sin might be destroyed*, that henceforth we should not *serve sin*, *Rom.* 6. 6. Now the Christian being in and by his sufferings, made partaker of Christs sufferings, cometh therein to have fellowship and communion with this effectual vertue and power, to the *crucyfying of his flesh, with the affections and lusts*. The effectual working of this power, is that which wrought in the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 4. 12. So then death worketh in us, or is *energetical* & effectually operative in us. This death that thus wrought in, was the death of Christ, as appears by ver. 10. *Alway bearing about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, &c.* And this was the Death to which he was *delivered*, ver. 11. Now wherein came he thus to be delivered unto this Death, so as alway to bear it about? namely, in his being perplexed on every side, *troubled, persecuted, and cast down*,

down, ver. 8, 9. They were light afflictions (though to the perishing of the outward man) and yet these wrought for him *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, ver. 16, 17. Thus then, in and by his sufferings, he came to have communion with that effectual working, that was in the Death of Christ; and this wrought for him this *far more exceeding & eternal weight of glory*, while it wrought in him to the conquest of *Satan*, to the *crucifying of the world, the old man, and the flesh, with the affections and lusts*. And by his continual sufferings, he alway carried about in the body this *dying*, in the effectual working whereof he *dyed daily*, 1 Cor. 15. 31. Ver. 13

Secondly, To inform us, what real ground and occasion there is for Christians to rejoyce in their sufferings, though they should be kindled even to a *fiery tryal*. It is a part of our spiritual Worship, to *rejoyce in Christ Jesus*, Philip. 3. 3. and particularly in

Ver. 13. his *Sufferings and Death*, 1 Cor. 15. 31. *I profeſs by your rejoycing which I have in Chriſt*, &c. As if he had ſaid, that glorying and rejoycing that is among you for your gifts and riches of utterance, and wiſdom., I enjoy ſuch rejoycing in that of Chriſt Jeſus whereby *I dye daily:* and this was in his fellowſhip with *Chriſts Sufferings*. And therefore his glorying was in the *Croſs* of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, &c. (*Gal.* 5. 14.) while (filling up the afflictions of Chriſt in his fleſh) he bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jeſus, ver. 17. Two Conſiderations may tend to quicken us (upon this very account) *to rejoyce in our Sufferings*.

Firſt, *That in all our Sufferings, Chriſt is made partakers of our Sufferings*, He ſuffers with us in them. *For we have not an High-Prieſt which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, though without ſin*, Hebr.

Hebr.4. 15. And this will appear to be true (not onely in reſpect of thoſe ſufferings that we endure for him (as hath been ſhewen before) but alſo in reſpect of thoſe ſufferings that we undergo from him, while he is chaſtening us for our ſins.) He himſelf is afflicted, even to the repenting him of what he hath done: He himſelf is as it were wounded with thoſe wounds that himſelf makes in his People. Such a like Spirit wrought in the Apoſtle toward the *Corinthians*. 2 Cor.7. 8,9. *Though I made you ſorry with a Letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the ſame Epiſtle made you ſorry, though it were but for a ſeaſon.* But *now I rejoyce, not that ye were made ſorry, but that ye ſorrowed to Repentance, &c.* In his former *Epiſtle*, he had wounded and put them to grief, by the ſharpneſs and ſeverity of his Miniſtry againſt the ſin that was among them, in the caſe of the *inceſtuous perſon*. And Ver. 1·3

Ver. 13 hereby he himself is brought into a conflict in himself, between repenting and not repenting of what he had done. He did not *repent*, but *rejoyce* that they were made *sorry to Repentance:* the fruit and success of that grief to which he had put them, makes him glad: and yet there was a repenting of, and a sorrow for the grief to which he had put them, though the sin that was among them had occasioned it. For as himself Reasons, Chap. 2. 2. *If I make you sorry, who is there then to make me glad, but the same that is made sorry by me?* and if you are made sorry by me, how shall I be made glad by you? Now, if that measure of the Spirit of Christ, that wrought in the Apostle, was thus tender and affectionate, as to be thus sensible of the wounds that his sharpness and severity had made upon them for their sins, insomuch that he himself was *grieved* for the *grief* that he had put *them to*: then surely, this

this tenderneſs, affectionateneſs, and ſympathy, is much more eminent in him in whom there is the fulneſs of that good Spirit that thus wrought in the Apoſtle, who, though he rejoyce in the fruit and ſucceſs of that ſorrow, that he puts his People to be-cauſe of their ſin, yet he doth as it were repent of the ſorrow it ſelf. This appears in his dealing with *Ephraim*, the revolted ten *Tribes*, that were back-ſlidden from his Kingdom eſtabliſhed in the Houſe of *David*, and from his true Worſhip ſet up in his Temple at *Jeruſalem*, Jer. 31. 18, 20. He for this had freely *chaſtened Ephraim*. *Ephraim* under the chaſtening, was like a *Bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoke*. The chaſtening continues till *Ephraim* is brought to *bemoan himſelf* and mourn over his ſins. And then he comes to diſcover and give an account how he himſelf was affected, all this time that *Ephraim* was afflicted by him for his ſin. *Since I ſpoke againſt* Ver. 13.

Ver. 13. *him, I do earneſtly remember him ſtill; therefore my bowels are troubled for him, I will ſurely have mercy on him.* As if he had ſaid, ſince the very firſt going forth of my word againſt him, I do earneſtly, and as it were paſſionately remember him. I cannot forget what I have done even againſt him. And the impreſſion of it ſtill abides with me. My very bowels were and ſtill are troubled for him. And therefore for my own ſake, I will ſurely have mercy on him. For I my ſelf am touched with the feeling of thoſe infirmities to which I have ſubjected him, being *afflicted in all his afflictions*, Iſa. 63. 9.

Secondly, As in all our Sufferings, he is made partaker of ours, *So alſo are we in them made partakers of his Sufferings.* All our Sufferings (whether for him, or from him) are diſpenced and come forth upon us, by or through him that ſuffered for us. And hence it is, that they all prove not

not vindictive, ſo much as reſtorative. Ver. 13.
His and ours are both poured out of the ſame Cup; and grace was poured into thoſe lips, which firſt taſted of this Cup, (*Pſal.*45.2.) whereby the whole Cup, (even the whole remainder of the Affliction of Chriſt, that every particular Chriſtian fills up in his own fleſh) becomes ſweetned and ſanctified through the fellowſhip of his Sufferings with ours. And hereupon the ſecond Uſe may be for Conſolation.

2. *Conſolation.* Firſt, *In aſſurance that we ſhall be ſupported in them.* If in them we have *fellowſhip with his Sufferings*, then we have in them *fellowſhip with himſelf.* For himſelf and his Sufferings are inſeparable. And if he be in them, his preſence will be our ſupport. His preſence and ſupport are both promiſed together, *Iſa.* 41. 10,11, &c. The ſtate of *Jacob*, was at that time a ſtate of Suffering: For he had thoſe that were incenſed againſt, Uſe 2.

and

Ver. 13. and ſtrove with him, (ver. 11.) thoſe that contended with, and made *War againſt* him, (verſ. 12.) And in this condition *Jacob* was but as a *worm*, and a *few men*, as it is in the Margin, (verſ. 14.) And yet in this ſtate, obſerve how the Lord ſpeaks to him, verſ. 10. *Fear thou not I am with thee. Be not diſmayed, I am thy God. I will ſtrengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteouſneſs.* In this ſtate I am thine, with thee: and this my preſence ſhall be thy ſtrength, help, and upholding, in all their oppoſition againſt thee.

Secondly, *In aſſurance, that they ſhall be ſweetned and ſanctified to us. And they become ſweetned by being ſanctified.* Now then a thing is ſaid to be ſanctified, when it is ſet apart unto God, for the furtherance of his Worſhip and Service in and among his People. So of old, the Temple, Altar, and Veſſels were ſanctified.

So,

So, the Lords ſanctifying of our ſuf- Ver. 13
ferings, intends and implyes thus much, that the Lord hath appointed, ſet apart, and cut out, a portion of ſufferings for his People, not for this end that he might thereby glorifie the will and luſts of the world that inflict them; but they are thus ſet apart and appointed for his own uſe, that he might thereby advantage and advance the Fear, Worſhip, and Service of his People toward himſelf. And therefore let us not fear, though perſecution and tribulation may for a ſeaſon diſappoint and prevent ſome viſible opportunities and wayes of worſhip; yet it ſhall hereby advance and improve the Worſhip of God in Spirit. As the correction of a Father, layes ſmart upon the fleſh in order to the bettering of the ſpirit of his Child, and to the fetching out the folly that is bound up in the heart of the Child. (And it is an Ordinance and Appointment of God ſanctified, that

Ver. 13. that is, ſet apart, for that end) So thoſe chaſtenings which God adminiſters by violent and wicked men (who are the *Rod of his anger*, Iſa. 10. 5.) are means ſanctified or ſet apart by him for that very end, to lop off that fleſhly luxuriancy and wantonneſs of ſpirit that ſtill cleaves to them, and to teach them by the things they ſuffer, obedience, reſignation, ſelf-denyal, patience, and the like. And being thus ſanctified or ſet apart by him for the further *ſanctifying of his People* (Heb. 12. 10.) we ought no more to fear that our holineſs and his ſervice ſhould be hindred by them, than by any other means of holineſs that he hath ſanctified for his ſervice.

Thirdly, *In aſſurance that we ſhall be delivered.* Now there is a two-fold ſtate of deliverance, with the aſſurance whereof we may be hereby comforted.

1. *A deliverance in ſufferings.* Though we be not freed from being brought into

into them, yet if (being in them) we Ver. 13.
are kept from being either corrupted or overcome by them, ſo that our ſufferings become not at all an occaſion of ſin to us; in this caſe we are ſaid to be delivered in them. This is that which is hinted, *Job* 5. 19. *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles, yea, in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thee.* Thou mayeſt be led into ſix, yea, into ſeven troubles: but in the midſt of them all, and when thou art encompaſſed and covered with them all, yet no evil ſhall touch thee: thou ſhalt by them all become never the more ſinful, never the leſſe righteous, and ſo long thou art well enough, thou art delivered. So Chriſt was *heard in that he feared*, Hebr. 5. 7. not that he was heard ſo, as not to be delivered unto death, but in that death, even in the pit of corruption, he was preſerved to be Gods Holy One, and not *to ſee corruption*. Now then, if in our ſufferings we have fellowſhip with Chriſt and his ſuffer-

Ver. 13. sufferings, then is his presence our assurance of deliverance in all our sufferings. For upon that account it was promised, *Isa.* 43. 2, 3. *I will be with thee; and then when thou passest through the waters, they shall not overflow thee.* As happened to the *Israelites* in their passage through the Red-Sea, and through *Jordan*, by vertue of the presence of the Lord in the Pillar of Fire, and in the Ark, *The Waters saw thee, O God, and fled, &c.* Psal. 77. 16. and 114. 3, 7. And again, *When thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee:* as happened to those three Worthies in the *Fiery Furnace*, by vertue of the presence of the Son of God walking in the midst of the Fire with them, *Dan.* 3. 25. And he gives the reason in the next words of that place, in *Isa.* *For I am the Lord thy God, the holy One of Israel thy Saviour.* He is our Saviour in suffering, as an *Holy One*; and so by his Holiness, preserves us holy and

and faithful to himself in the midst of Ver. 13
our sufferings.

2. *A deliverance out of suffering.* And that upon a two-fold account. First, In regard our sufferings are but a participation of, and as it were a part of his sufferings. Now his sufferings we know ended in a glorious Resurrection. He was not only delivered in them, but triumphantly brought out of them; it being impossible that he should be always held by the pains or cords of them. Now the sufferings of his People, being but the remainders of his afflictions in their flesh, they will also find the same issue. And therfore their deliverance is promised under the same notion, *viz.* under the form of a Resurrection, as their suffrings are under the form of his Death. So the sufferings of his Church under literal *Babylon*, are foretold under the form of his Death, and their deliverance under the form of his Resurrection: *Hos.*6. 2. *After two dayes he*

will

Ver. 13 *will revive us, and the third day he will revive us, &c.* And ſo again, in the *Reſurrection of the dry bones*, Ezek. 37. In like manner, the ſufferings of his Church under *myſtical Babylon*, and their deliverance from out of them, are foretold under the form of his Death and Reſurrection, in the killing and raiſing again of the *Witneſſes*, after they had layen dead *three dayes and an half*, Revel. 11. Which ſeems alſo to be pointed at in that myſterious Prophecy, *Iſ.* 26. 19. *Thy dead men ſhall live, with my dead body ſhall they ariſe. Awake, and ſing, &c.* Secondly, In regard that through this fellowſhip with his ſufferings, he himſelf ſuffers with us (as was hinted before) He is, through his own compaſſion, touch'd with a *feeling of their infirmities, and afflicted in all their afflictions;* and in this reſpect, he himſelf (in ſome ſort) is not compleatly delivered, till they are delivered alſo. He himſelf is delivered when they are freed, and that Salvation

tion that perfects their deliverance, Ver. 13.
terminates his ſufferings: And therefore hear how the Lord of Hoſts, the Mighty One of *Iſrael*, delivers his reſolution, *Iſa.* 1.24. *Ah! I will eaſe me of mine adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.* That, and thoſe that oppreſſed and defiled his People, were his burden; and he was preſſed under them, as a Cart is preſſed that is full of ſheaves; he was uneaſie under them. But when he ſhould have purely purged away all thoſe perſons and things, that as droſſe and tinne defiled them, and oppreſſed him; when he ſhould have reſtored their *Judges as at firſt, and their Counſellors as at the beginning*; made them viſibly a *City of Righteouſneſs, a faithful City*, ver. 25, 26. When the *deſtruction of tranſgreſſors and ſinners ſhall be together*, &c. (ver. 28.) then is he ſaid to have *eaſed Himſelf of his Enemies*, &c. And therfore though he were exalted to the *Fathers right-hand*, yet he ſits there expecting till

Ver. 1. *His Enemies be made his foot-ſtool*, Heb. 10. 13. There is a further Conqueſt and Salvation that he yet waits for; And in order thereunto, *John* in viſion ſeeth him coming forth with a *Bow and a Crown, conquering and to conquer*, Rev. 6. 2. And his Conqueſt is for *Himſelf*, Pſal. 98. 1. *O ſing unto the Lord a new ſong; for he hath done marvellous things: His right hand and his holy Arm, hath gotten Him the Victory.* His Conqueſt over the Enemies of his People, is a getting the Victory for Himſelf. This conſideration may now comfort us in full aſſurance of deliverance.

Uſe 3. 3. *Exhortation.* This may be improved unto a word of *Exhortation, to encline us to ſeek, that in all our ſufferings we may be partakers of his ſufferings.* Where conſider, 1. The Means tending hereunto. 2. The Motives that may ſtir us up to it.

1. *The Means tending hereunto.* We ſhall propoſe theſe two.

First,

First, *See that you be united to him-* Ver. 13.
self. If we would be partakers of his ſufferings, we muſt firſt look that we be partakers of himſelf. This was the Apoſtles order, That I may be *found in Him*, Phil. 3. 9. And then follows the *fellowſhip of his ſufferings*, ver. 10.

Secondly, *There muſt be in our ſufferings a conformity to his, if we would in ours have fellowſhip with his.* This the ſame Scripture teacheth us, *Phil.* 3. 10. —— *the fellowſhip of his ſufferings, being made conformable to his death.* Conformity readily begets Community. Things that are alike, eaſily unite, and maintain a mutual inter-communion between themſelvs, and take part with each other. So if we would in our ſufferings be partakers of Chriſt's ſufferings, we muſt ſee that there be ſomewhat of likeneſs between our ſufferings and his.

Now this Conformity or likeneſs between his ſufferings and ours, conſiſts

Ver. 13. ſiſts in ſuch things as theſe, *viz.*

1. *When we undergo ſuch things as he underwent, when there is a likeneſſe between our ſufferings and his in the kind of them.* They called the Maſter of the houſe *Beelzebub*, and ſo them of his houſhold likewiſe, *Mat.* 10. 25. *If the world hate you, it hated me before it hated you*, John 15. 18. *And if they have perſecuted me, they will alſo perſecute you*, ver. 20. And indeed, what ſuffering, for the kind of it, can we meet with, that may not be exemplified in his ſufferings? For he was by the Lord, by Satan, and men, *tempted in all things like as we are*; that ſo we might in all our ſufferings, ſee how they were but a part of his ſufferings, and ſomewhat of that which is behind of his afflictions. But this ſingly and alone is not ſufficient to produce that conformity that tends to a fellowſhip with his ſufferings. For the impenitent Thief was crucified as well as Chriſt: Therefore this Conformity is,

2. *When*

2. *When there is alſo a likeneſs be-* Ver. 13.
tween his ſufferings and ours in the cauſe and occaſion of them. He ſuffered for being good, and doing good. He was not of *this world*, but teſtified of the *works thereof* that they *were evil*, *therefore the world hated him. They were not of the world, as he was not of the world* (John 17. 16.) *If they had been of the world, the world would have loved his own. But becauſe they were not of the world, but he had choſen them out of the world, therefore the world hated them*, John 15. 19. Becauſe they are his witneſſes againſt the over-ſpreading and Anti-chriſtian corruptions; therefore the *Beaſt* out of the *bottomleſs Pit* makes *war againſt them.* And when we ſuffer like things upon a like account, then is there that conformity that leads to a participation, and makes our ſufferings a part of his.

3. *When there is a likeneſs between his ſufferings and ours, in the ſpirit wherewith we undergo them: when the ſame*

Ver. 13. *ſame mind is in us* (*in our ſufferings*) *that was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus* (*in his ſufferings*) Phil. 2. 5. *He made himſelf of no reputation: he humbled* (or emptied) *himſelf, and became obedient to death*, v. 7, 8. he ſuffered in great ſilence, ſubjection, patience, meekneſs and innocence. Now whatever our ſufferings are for the kind or occaſion of them, yet if we be thus ſpirited in them, there wants not that likeneſs that leads into a fellowſhip with his ſufferings.

Laſtly, *If our ſufferings be like his in theſe reſpects, they ſhall be alſo like his in the end and deſign of them.* His ſufferings wrought for the good and deliverance of *his Church.* So ſhall our ſufferings alſo be for the *Bodies ſake, the Church*, (Col. 1. 24.) and by *filling up the meaſure that is behind*, ſhall contribute to the deliverance of the *whole*, Rev. 6. 10, 11.

2. *The Motives that may ſtir us up hereunto*; and they appear by conſidering, Firſt,

First, *The excellency of this fellowship with Christ's sufferings.* To know Christ in the fellowship of his sufferings, was by the Apostle accounted such an *excellency of knowledge*, that for it he had *suffered the loss of all things, and counted them but as dung that he might be found* in this, *pressing onward toward the power of Christs Resurrection*, Phil. 3. 8, 10. And among those *All things*, were his legal Priviledges, his legal Blamelesness, his legal Righteousness, *ver.* 5, 6, 8. as implying, that this was of greater excellency, and he had rather be found in this than in them all. Ver. 13.

Secondly, *The usefulness of this fellowship.* Which is intimated to us in that word of the Text, *Inasmuch.* Which implyeth two things.

1. *That this participation of Christs Sufferings, is the Ground or Reason of our rejoycings in tribulation;* and the words speak to this purpose, *Think not strange at the fiery Tryal, but rather rejoyce,*

Ver. 13. *rejoyce, becauſe you are therein partakers of Chriſts Sufferings.* Now that muſt needs be counted worthy the preſſing after, that is a foundation of joy and rejoycing, even in and under the *fiery Tryal.*

2. *That it is the meaſure of this our joy. Rejoyce inaſmuch as ye are partakers of Chriſts Sufferings.* So much fellowſhip as you have with Chriſt in his Sufferings, ſo much joy you may rejoyce with in the moſt *Fiery Tryal.*

FINIS.

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